

THE NATIONAL AND ENGLISH REVIEW

Vol. 144

FEBRUARY, 1955

No. 864

EPISODES OF THE MONTH

THE EDITOR

SHOULD CAPITAL GAINS BE TAXED?

F. J. ERROLL

THE TREE NAMED SALAZAR

HECTOR BOLITHO

ARISTOTLE'S STAR PUPIL

VISCOUNT SOULBURY

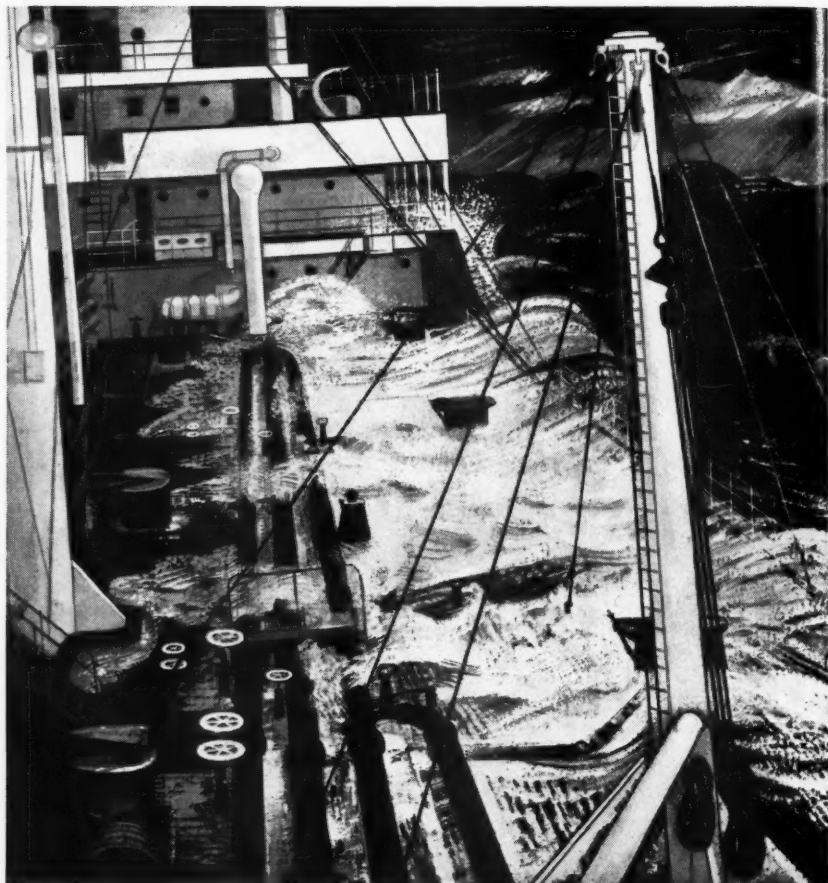
ESSAY ON PROSE. II.

WALTER DE LA MARE

AND OTHER CONTRIBUTIONS BY DENYS SMITH, ERIC
GILLETT, JACQUETTA HAWKES, ROGER FULFORD, RUBY
MILLAR, LOMBARD, AND ALEC ROBERTSON

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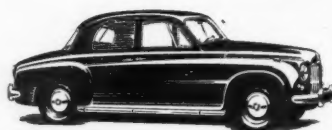
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EPISODES OF THE MONTH

WHEN newspaper headlines are devoted to the weather, as they were for days on end last month, the inference may be drawn that world affairs are at a standstill. But in fact the month of January was eventful in many ways. At home the menace of a railway strike was averted at the last moment by another massive wage concession. Abroad there was further evidence of a more realistic American approach to Far Eastern problems. The Secretary-General of the United Nations visited China and the American leaders have since had the benefit of his confidential report. It is now reasonable to hope that Communist China may, if certain conditions are fulfilled, be admitted to the United Nations.

This would of course imply no recognition of merit and virtue in the regime, but simply that it is in effective control of the area known as China, just as the Malenkov Government is in effective control of the area known as Russia. That the Soviet Union should belong to the United Nations, and Communist China be excluded, is a patent absurdity, which contradicts and nullifies the U.N.'s claim to be a world organization.

Manila Treaty Must be Clarified

A CONFERENCE of the Manila Treaty Powers is impending as we write, and Great Britain will be represented at this by Sir Anthony Eden. It is to be hoped that he will use his diplomatic skill and strategic sense to impose upon the Manila Treaty a sharper outline than it at present possesses. Vagueness is always the greatest danger in foreign affairs, and nowhere is it more dangerous than in the East, where it is interpreted as weakness by friend and foe alike. If, for instance, we intend to guarantee Thailand against military attack (as distinct from subversion), we must say so now in unmistakable terms. A guarantee in this case can have no value unless it is known that an armed attack on Thailand will immediately precipitate an all-out war between the aggressor and those Powers which have given the guarantee.

This raises a further problem. Can it be expected that the American Congress or the British Parliament will commit their forces to such a war

on the reported occurrence of a frontier incident in which they are not directly concerned? In other words, can a guarantee honestly be given to Thailand unless token Allied forces are stationed in that country? The objections to such a course are many and obvious, but the issue cannot be shirked.

Sanctions Against China

IN their struggle for mastery in the Far East the Chinese have immense advantages, but we have noted before that the West is not without sanctions. Apart from certain conflicts of interest between the two great Communist Powers, it is anyway most unlikely that the Chinese will be able to develop their country with Russian help alone. Above all, the military sanction is probably still decisive. So far the Chinese have had to face American armed strength only in Korea, but even there they suffered heavily and were unable to achieve victory. If they were to involve themselves in total war with the United States, their own country would be the battleground and atomic bombs would be dropped on their cities. This is surely not a prospect which they are ready to face.

It remains for us, therefore, to define the points at which war with the United States and her Allies would inevitably ensue. As her principal Ally we cannot evade this process of definition, nor can we refuse to join in any guarantees which may be necessary to ensure a balance of power in the Far East. Now that the Americans have limited and clarified their commitment to Chiang Kai-Shek, the most serious obstacle to Allied co-operation in that part of the world has been removed.

Japan and G.A.T.T.

MEANWHILE the problem of Japan's admission to G.A.T.T. must soon be settled and its implications faced. The Japanese are a vital element in the pattern of Far Eastern defence, and unless they are given a fair chance to trade within the Western system they will almost certainly go Communist. It is therefore clearly right that Japan should be admitted to G.A.T.T.

Unfortunately this means that we must either forgo the opportunity of expanding our trade with Japan, or enter at once into tariff negotiations which must to some extent prejudice the home market for British cotton manufactures. The latter course would have an immediate effect upon political opinion in Lancashire, which the Socialists would not be slow to exploit. In fact Lancashire is now far less dependent than it used to be upon the cotton industry, and increased Japanese competition would in no way reproduce the conditions of unemployment and hardship which prevailed before the war. But human beings are less easily influenced by reason than by memories and fears, and these abound in the North-West—as do also marginal seats!

EPISODES OF THE MONTH

The Government's Duty

PARTY considerations must always give way to the overriding interest of the nation, and there can be no doubt that it is the Government's duty to negotiate with the Japanese. But every effort must be made both to protect the British cotton industry so far as it can reasonably be protected, and to reassure Lancashire that there will be no return to the "bad old days." Ministers must go out of their way to explain the position in all its aspects. And the Chancellor of the Exchequer must keep Lancashire in the forefront of his mind when he is framing his next Budget.

It is appropriate to refer here to the knighthood conferred in the New Year Honours upon Mr. Ian Horobin, the Conservative Member for Oldham East. No man has been more outspoken both in stating Lancashire's case to the nation, and in stating the nation's case to Lancashire. He is a politician of unusual integrity, whose fearless conduct in Parliament has so far denied him the opportunity of office which he richly deserves. During the Recess he visited Japan and other Far Eastern countries with a Parliamentary delegation, and his views will command much respect and attention in the debates which lie ahead.

Honours List: Reform Needed

AN Honours List is by its very nature invidious, and whenever one appears there are always mutterings: "Why on earth was X given that? Why wasn't Y included?"

But apart from personal criticism of this kind, which is generally profitless, there is much to be said for reforming the system of honours. Indeed, such a reform is overdue. The Government of Ceylon has shown the way, by deciding that in future no appointments will be recommended in the Order of the British Empire, and that, while knighthoods will still be given, they will from now onwards be associated with Ceylonese traditions, rather than with British or Christian Orders of Chivalry. Both these changes are constructive in character, and in no way affect the Crown's status as the "fountain of honour."

An Out-of-date Name

THERE can be no doubt that the most anomalous feature of the present system is the so-called Order of the British Empire. This has many grades and in every List it is conferred upon a wide variety of United Kingdom worthies—trade unionists, lifeboatmen, actors and actresses, hospital nurses, local councillors, police officers, etc.—most of whom have one thing in common, that their careers and services are wholly unrelated to what is known as the British Empire. It would, in fact, be interesting to subject the members of this Order to an elementary

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test of Empire knowledge. The results would help to confirm that a good idea has been misapplied.

But that is not all, because the name of the Order is also an anomaly in modern circumstances. In this country there may be a certain reluctance to abandon the term "Empire," but in most other parts of the Commonwealth it has an unwelcome sound. Besides, it has definitely been established, in a Parliamentary answer, that the correct omnibus term for the Commonwealth of Nations and the dependent territories is "Commonwealth" and not "Empire." Clearly, therefore, the Order of the British Empire should be renamed. The insignia of the Order could remain, but its motto, "For God and the Empire," would also need to be adapted.

A Task for the Prime Ministers

IDEALLY, the system of honours should be changed on the advice of the Commonwealth Prime Ministers, who will soon be meeting in London. Some nations of the Commonwealth have, it is true, virtually "contracted out" of the honours system, but we have frequently remarked that membership of the United Kingdom Privy Council is still accepted by the leading politicians of Canada, for instance, where it has become fashionable to spurn all other honours. This suggests that in Canada, and possibly in India and Pakistan as well, honours might still be accepted if they were given a Commonwealth, rather than a strictly monarchical or United Kingdom, *cachet*. The Privy Council has somehow achieved this, though it is still in fact a United Kingdom institution; a proper Commonwealth Privy Council has yet to be created. In the same way the distinction of knighthood might surely be extended and given a wider scope. The example of the Ceylonese Government might well be followed by others.

British Railways

NO fair-minded person would have grugged the railwaymen an increase in wages if he had been satisfied that the large expansion of railway staff since before the war had been matched by improved services. In fact, however, the railways are probably less efficient to-day than they were at the beginning of the century. Admittedly the travelling public has vastly increased and the war entailed maintenance deficiencies which have never been made good. But when every allowance has been made for bad luck, the suspicion of bad management remains.

Both before and since nationalization, the State has been ultimately responsible, and therefore largely to blame. Now at last a drastic modernization programme has been brought forward, and it is to be hoped that, in a decade or so, British Railways will no longer be a deterrent to the foreign visitor and a stock joke in the music-halls. Under the new scheme it may be possible to solve the labour problem painlessly; existing

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staff need not be cut, but the pattern of recruitment can be changed, so that there will be more opportunity for skilled technicians and less wasted manpower than at present. The nation has a right to expect that the unions will co-operate in this healthy and long overdue development.

The Case of Mrs. Knight

STRONG feelings were roused, and letters poured into newspaper offices, as a result of two broadcasts given in the Home Service of the B.B.C. on the subject "Morals Without Religion." It was suggested by many people, and by at least one responsible organ of the Press, that the B.B.C. should not have sponsored these anti-Christian talks. Unfortunately those who took this line gave the impression that they were less Christian in spirit than the speaker, Mrs. Knight, herself.

It is of course arguable that a public broadcasting corporation, in a country where Christianity is the established religion, should block all criticism of Christianity on the air. But it should never be forgotten that Britain has established not only Christianity, but also the great— and Christian—principle of toleration. This principle demands that fair treatment should be given to every kind of non-conformity, ranging from Roman Catholicism to agnosticism, and even to Communism. Of course it is the B.B.C.'s duty to ensure that Christianity should receive very full representation in its programmes, and it should perhaps give special facilities to Anglicanism in England and to Presbyterianism in Scotland. But that other forms of opinion and belief should be altogether debarred would be an odious reversion to the obscurantist methods of an earlier age.

Smug Unbelief and Outraged Piety

THE attacks which were made upon Mrs. Knight's broadcasts gave them an importance which they would not otherwise have deserved. The more literal and technical dogmas of the Church are of course fair game for any moderately intelligent critic, and Mrs. Knight was able to expose a number of absurdities and contradictions, which have for long been evident to thoughtful Christians. But her attitude towards the conception of God was almost incredibly naïve, and showed quite simply that she has been denied the supreme privilege of religious experience. Even so, she should have had more imagination and humility than to suggest that belief in God was on a par with belief in Father Christmas. So gross an error as this implies intellectual weakness, as well as spiritual emptiness. And her rejection of Christianity as a mere myth betrayed a mind which must be seriously lacking in historical insight.

Nevertheless, Mrs. Knight shone as a controversialist by comparison with most of those who assailed her. Her manner of arguing was relatively gentle and reasonable, and she showed some respect (though admittedly not enough) for convictions other than her own. The smug unbeliever

cannot easily be persuaded that faith, though not arrived at by ratiocination alone, and though different in kind from intellectual certitude, is still the strongest and deepest force in human nature. But this truth will never be conveyed by pious fulminations and uncharitable abuse.

The Real Insult

THE commotion about Mrs. Knight's talks followed closely a similar outcry against the performance on television of George Orwell's *1984*. According to some, the stomach of the modern Briton is too weak for a vivid picture of totalitarianism in action, and his conscience too tender for any challenge to his formal (and in practice largely abandoned) beliefs. If this were true, our nation would be in a state of decline. But fortunately it is not true. The people of this country are quite prepared to face the mysteries, the hazards, and also the horrors, of life.

Those who protest against *1984* or Mrs. Knight are the squeamish minority, who seek in the demure comfort of respectable homes, surmounted by wireless aerials and television masts, immunity from all the doubt and danger which this world contains. Their religion is confined to "Lift up your Hearts" and broadcast services. They delight in parlour games and are stirred to the depths by Mr. Gilbert Harding and Sir Robert Boothby. To them the State is benevolent, though at present too exacting, and God is benevolent and wholly unexacting.

Such people regard Mrs. Knight's talks as an insult to Christianity; but in fact their own attitude towards it is a much greater insult. They seem to forget that the religion to which they pay lip-service was born in the agony of crucifixion and that it rose through the sacrifice of countless martyrs. Even now its cause is being upheld—in Kenya, for instance, and behind the Iron Curtain—by men and women who are ready to suffer any amount of torture for their faith. Are the Christians of our residential suburbs to be left in ignorance of what their fellow-Christians are enduring? Is the religion which triumphed against lions and tigers, and which conquered the Roman Empire, to be protected against the verbal shafts of a Mrs. Knight? The idea is too preposterous to be entertained.

SHOULD CAPITAL GAINS BE TAXED?

By F. J. ERROLL

AMONGST Labour economic "thinkers" the idea of perpetual dividend limitation is losing ground; they are now studying the more attractive concept of taxing capital gains. The concept is attractive to them, not only because it could be a powerful aid to the process of redistributing wealth, but because it makes a spurious appeal to the average Englishman's conception of fair play.

After a year of spectacular rises in share prices there are many people, especially those not so fortunate as to have participated, who complain that the capital gains which these advances represent are free of tax, while their own salaries, pensions and dividends are subject to income tax at 9s. in the pound, and often surtax in addition. Even amongst those who have gained substantially from the recent rises are to be found individuals who express surprise that no capital gains tax exists in this country to remove part of their usually effortless accretion. The head of one important and expanding business has gone so far as to say that he would welcome a capital gains tax. In his view not only would such a tax reduce or prevent the activities of takeover bidders, but the yield from such a tax would enable the Chancellor to reduce the high rates of income tax and surtax which make the proper remuneration of an able executive well nigh impossible.

Generally speaking, it is advisable to refrain from canvassing the merits or drawbacks of a new tax, because the proposal may appear only too attractive to the Chancellor of the day and

his advisers! "Old taxes are good taxes" is a sound rule. With well-established taxes individuals know their liabilities and can estimate their additional taxation if they embark on new activities. A new tax, however, can never in practice operate precisely as intended. Every new tax sets up uncertainties and has unexpected consequences which can cause dislocation and frustrations not contemplated at the time of its introduction. The profits tax, particularly when applied to undistributed profits, is such a tax.

But silence on the subject of a new tax is inadvisable if its advantages are being actively propagated, and more especially when, as in the case of the capital gains tax, the principal advantages are political—the advance of the Socialist concept of "social" justice coupled with the redistribution of wealth. Before proceeding to an analysis of the pros and cons of such a tax, it may be advantageous to examine the extent to which capital is already subject to tax in this country.

Capital transactions which involve a change of title attract stamp duty at the rate of £2 per cent. This tax must be paid every time a security changes hands, and is levied regardless of gain or loss on the part of the buyer or seller. This tax constitutes a severe tax on all movements of capital.

Companies or individuals trading in securities and property, such as finance houses, property companies, and stock market jobbers, are taxed already on all capital gains on the ground that these gains are their profits from trading. Capital losses, being trading

losses, are of course allowed as an offset against these profits.

Death duties are an important form of capital taxation. All the assets of the deceased are added together, or aggregated, for duty to be levied at the rate appropriate to the total value of the estate, and this takes into account any increases in value which have taken place during the time the deceased owned the assets. These increases, whether realized or not, are included in the total and swell the aggregate so that the whole often bears a higher overall rate of duty. For those who hanker after a capital gains tax, surely it should be enough that the capital gains of a lifetime are aggregated and taxed at the appropriate rate on a man's death. But in fact it is not enough for them. They point to the Federal Capital Gains Tax in U.S.A. and assert that a similar tax could be applied here.

The Town and Country Planning Act of 1947 provided for all increases in land values to accrue to the State. This was to be achieved by levying a Development Charge on all development work estimated to be equal to the rise in value of the site as the result of the development. This charge was in effect a 100 per cent. capital gains tax on all land values. The Development Charge was not a success in practice, and was repealed by the present Conservative Government.

There is always a difficulty in discussing hypothetical taxes. Unless the advocates of a new tax are specific about its scope and extent, its opponents can only resort to a form of shadow boxing. Fortunately, however, one or two general considerations can be disposed of in advance, and there is also American experience to draw upon, although, as will become apparent later, this does not provide an exact parallel for aiding investigations into

likely British reactions. Further, the Fabian Society has issued pamphlets which deal with this tax, and their recommendations give some indication of the way in which a future Socialist Chancellor might implement Budgetary proposals for a capital gains tax.

The most important general consideration is that of yield. If the rate of capital gains tax is high enough to produce a substantial revenue, then it will have a marked deterrent effect. If, on the other hand, a low rate is adopted, insufficient revenue will accrue from the tax to make possible worthwhile reductions in the current rates of income tax and surtax. In the United States the yield from capital gains taxation at present is about 4 per cent. of the total corporate and personal income tax. Assuming that a British tax was arranged to produce an equivalent yield, the total sum raised would be about £80 million per annum. What Chancellor would to-day introduce an entirely new type of tax for the sake of a sum which could relieve income tax by rather less than 5*d.* in the pound? And there is the administrative effort on the part of the Inland Revenue to take into account, as well as the additional burden on the accountancy profession.

The next matter to be considered is the way in which capital gains are to be assessed. For practical purposes only the gains resulting from realization of the assets should be taken into account. A man buys some shares for £100. Three years later he decides to sell them and he receives £145. He has made a capital gain of £45, and could be taxed on this. But if he had not sold them he should not be taxed, as he had not realized his gain. So speaks one school of thought, but another considers that the gain should be taxed, whether realized or not. This would involve annual valuations of the assets of every taxpayer, and

SHOULD CAPITAL GAINS BE TAXED ?

would be an enormous task. There would then have to be forced realizations in order to find the money for tax payment. These realizations might have to be made at a time when market conditions had changed for the worse.

While one share may have risen in value, another may have fallen. The individual mentioned above had, let us suppose, also bought some shares for £100 which three years later have only fetched £70. Thus on this transaction he made a capital loss of £30. He has therefore made a net capital gain of only £15 during the period. Views are divided on whether capital losses should be set off against capital gains.

There is a further complication. Should a capital gain be allowed as an offset against an income loss, and correspondingly a capital loss allowed as an offset against current income ? Those who hold that a capital gain is to be regarded as part of a man's disposable income, and not as an addition to his capital, take the view that the gain should be added to his other income, and the whole taxed at the appropriate rate. But they shy away from the inevitable consequence—that sometimes it will be a subtraction sum and not an addition sum. And high rates of surtax could make capital losses seem quite attractive for persons with large incomes !

Then some take the view that there should be different treatment for short-term gains and long-term ones. They hold that the former are "speculative" and should be taxed at a higher rate. Thus a gain on the Stock Exchange during 1954 would pay more than, say, the gain on the sale of a house purchased ten years previously.

A balance would have to be achieved somehow between these competing considerations if a capital gains tax introduced into the United Kingdom were to have any semblance of fairness. The

United States has already experienced all these confusions. It is therefore worthwhile examining American experience so far.

"For over thirty years the taxation of capital gains has been the most criticized feature of the Internal Revenue Code in the United States." So speaks Mr. A. R. Ilersic in *Accountancy*, December, 1954. Professor Seltzer, the Professor of Economics at Wayne University, U.S.A., author of *The Nature and Tax Treatment of Capital Gains and Losses*, and a leading authority on the subject, says in his book (p. 5): "The effective legal definition of gains and losses has varied from time to time: the dividing line between long term and short term transactions has at different times been 24, 18, 12 and 6 months; . . . the point at which the owner of any kind of assets ceases to be merely an investor and becomes, in the eyes of the law, engaged in buying and selling them, is by no means always clear, and has been the subject of much litigation; . . . what constitutes 'realization' has also been altered by the statutes and courts from time to time."

Five important factors emerge from a study of American experience. The following commentary is in the main an abridgement of points made by Mr. Ilersic in the same issue of *Accountancy* (p. 451):—

1. By far the most important class of property transactions affected by the tax is *stock exchange dealings*. The tax actually covers all kinds of property and other classes of assets, including houses, but some restriction on taxing these other assets has been necessary.

2. When money values remain stable *the yield from the tax is comparatively small*. Only in periods of inflation or boom does the tax raise any substantial revenue. During the 1926-29 boom the annual yield represented over 40 per cent. of personal income tax collected.

But following the collapse of 1931, losses to individuals representing 36 per cent. of their income tax liability were admitted. In 1933 the practice of setting net losses against taxable income was repealed. Nevertheless during the postwar boom capital gains between 1945 and 1951 represented barely 4 per cent. of total personal tax revenues.

3. *The tax only operates when a gain is realized.* This is mainly to avoid excessive administrative complications, but it does lead to unfairness. In order to avoid the tax a wealthy individual may borrow against the security of his assets to increase his income rather than realize his assets and thus attract the tax.

4. The tax in the United States makes provision for a *loss offset*. This would appear logical in any capital gains tax, if it is to be fair. But Socialists would argue otherwise. For them a capital gains tax is a form of recurrent capital levy made palatable to the fairminded by being exacted only when there is an increase in the value of the capital asset.

5. The U.S. Revenue department distinguishes between *short-term and long-term gains and losses*. Short-term are those which result from a sale less than six months from its purchase. Long-term gains are assessed at half the rate of short-term gains, presumably on the ground that "speculative" gains should bear a heavier rate of tax. This differential rate has its repercussions on the American Stock Exchange. Investors may defer realizing their gains on a rising market, thereby intensifying the upward movement of prices. When markets fall, stockholders may sell in order to cash in on a loss offset, and thus force prices down still further.

The American capital gains tax can also be a deterrent to would-be investors. According to the *Economic Digest*, January, 1952, the President of the New York Stock Exchange said: "Time and again I have heard people say, 'I know that this is a sound venture and I know that it needs equity money, but I won't go into it because if it

succeeds I will have to give most of my gain to the Government, while if it fails I will have to bear the loss myself.' . . . I think it is demonstrable that a high capital gains tax has been an important factor in discouraging people from making capital investments." (Not every investor has a convenient loss to set off against a gain!) And again, "It seems to me that there are but two reasons why people invest their capital. Either they invest to obtain income by way of rents, dividends or interest, or they invest with the hope that they may sell the investment at a profit. Unless taxpayers are willing to buy and sell capital assets there is no possible way of deriving revenue from a capital gains tax. . . . The effects of the capital gains tax extend far beyond the security market. It hits every landowner and every business man who makes a capital investment of any kind. Its chilling effect is as great on the price of farm lands and other real estate as it is on securities listed on the New York Stock Exchange."

The Fabian Society has given a useful indication of the way the Socialist mind is working. Their pamphlets, *Taxation Today* (No. 149) and *Capital Gains Taxation* (No. 150) deserve study for this reason. The former pamphlet sets out boldly on p. 13: "We consider that it is unjust and undesirable that this form of money making should not be taxed while earned and unearned incomes are. . . . Such a tax (i.e., capital gains tax) could be assessed on the increase in value *whether realized or not*. . . . The tax liability would not be affected by whether the investment were held or sold. There would not be the incentive to hold investments which were increasing in value while selling those which had fared worst in order to reduce the tax liability." The Fabian Society is here seen trying to improve on American experience. But

SHOULD CAPITAL GAINS BE TAXED ?

later (p. 14), doubtless infected with the hangover of Daltonian inflation, it goes on to stress the advantage of a tax levied solely on realized gains, since such a tax "would fall on people when they are actually realizing cash which they are likely to spend."

In dealing with the problem of short-term and long-term gains the Fabians consider that short-term gains should be added to an individual's income and taxed as such at the appropriate rate of income tax and surtax. For this purpose a short-term gain would be one derived within a period of twelve months. Long-term gains would be taxed at a separate and graded rate up to 50 per cent. for gains in excess of £1,000. Such a punitive rate would seriously hinder desirable industrial investment and expansion.

The political approach to a capital gains tax can be clearly seen in the Fabian Society's proposal that capital gains on the sale of an owner-occupied house should be exempt from tax if the money is used to buy another house within three years. As pamphlet No. 149 points out, on p. 16 : "A capital gain on the sale of his existing house will probably be the result of a general rise in the price of houses, so that his new house will be correspondingly more expensive. To tax the gain would unfairly penalize those who moved house, and would undesirably restrict people's mobility." This is, of course, one of the arguments against a capital gains tax : should inflation be taxable ? According to the Fabians, it should not be when the individual is a householder with a vote, but it should be when the hated shareholder sees his holdings rise in value. As for football pools, the Fabians consider, on balance, that the capital gains which a large prize represents should not be taxed. The reason they give is that winnings accrue to so many people—voters all !

The Fabians have taken the American system and ingeniously adapted it for British use. They have eliminated some of the American difficulties by advocating harsher treatment for big investors, and softer treatment for their potential friends. Mrs. Langley, however, in Pamphlet No. 150, admits on p. 18 "that some degree of unfairness; probably to capital losers in the smaller income groups, would probably result."

America instituted a capital gains tax when rates of income tax were low and large sums were being made by successful development work in a new and untried country. To-day income tax rates are still lower in America than they are in Britain. Britain has a more severe system of income tax which, together with swingeing death duties, are imposed on an island economy that cannot hope to benefit from rich strikes in virgin territory, as can the United States even to-day. The American taxation system, comprising moderate income tax, a capital gains tax and moderate death duties, undoubtedly suits the American economy. It would be less than fair to graft their capital gains tax on to our already over-taxed system. It is significant that Canada, a developing country like the U.S.A., has no capital gains tax.

Against this background of American experience the disadvantages of a capital gains tax for Britain are easy to discern. Purely on the grounds of expediency the present is the wrong time to introduce such a tax. The great rise in stock market prices has already taken place. Further increases are likely to be small, and in the case of many individual stocks there may well be falls. So far from having substantial gains to be taxed, individuals might find themselves starting with losses in 1955 with which to offset future taxable gains.

The tax would be difficult to collect,

even if confined to realized gains and losses. The staffs of the Inland Revenue have more than enough work to do already. The administration of a new tax would need additional staff, who would in any case only bring in a relatively small amount of new revenue.

Taking the long view, although there might be substantial revenue in good years, it would fall off heavily in bad years, at the very time when the Exchequer would be in greatest need of funds. The Chancellor of the time would be tempted, if not compelled, to resort to deficit financing.

A capital gains tax would weaken the structure of the market by tending to exaggerate a rising trend and possibly exaggerating a fall. By penalizing the short-term speculator a valuable part of the market mechanism might disappear, valuable because he is often the only buyer willing to meet sellers at a time of falling prices.

Some may argue that as the tax has had no serious economic effects in the United States it would do no real harm here. Such an argument ignores the special difficulties of this country and

the cumulative effect of the heavy blows which have fallen on risk-taking and enterprise, as well as on savings. The tax would aggravate the problem of raising money for the creation and development of new enterprises. Most people take the risk of a new issue in the hope of increasing their capital, rather than as a safe investment for income purposes. A capital gains tax would thus be a tax on risk-taking. The tax would also make it more difficult for the family business to carry on. The capital gain on floating the business as a public company would be taxed, and then the family holdings would be taxed again through death duties. Since the war many American firms have invested in Britain, and the new factories they have built here have contributed substantially to full employment. If we now add a capital gains tax to our excessively heavy rates of income tax we are unlikely to encourage further American investment.

A capital gains tax hinders development, initiative and expansion. It should have no place in a Conservative philosophy.

F. J. ERROLL.

THE TREE NAMED SALAZAR

By HECTOR BOLITHO

BEFORE I met Dr. Salazar, in his fortress by the sea, I made two journeys in Portugal, beginning, suitably, in the Rua Nova Dos Inglezes, one of the chief streets in Oporto. This has been the centre of the prosperous English shippers of Port wine since the 17th century. But the bond with Britain is older than this. In 1386, John of Gaunt sailed from Plymouth, with his army, his wife, his daughters and his mistress, to claim the crown of Castille. There was already a treaty

between Britain and Portugal, signed in 1378: it was confirmed by the marriage, in June, 1387, between Philippa, John of Gaunt's daughter, and King John of Portugal. The treaty has been ratified many times and has endured ever since: it was proved to be lively as recently as October, 1943, when Dr. Salazar agreed to allow the Royal Air Force to use the Azores as a base for their war against U-boats in the Atlantic.

Philippa, the first English Queen of

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Portugal, was married in Oporto. She died of plague in 1415 and is buried in the Gothic abbey at Batalha, the noble building with an alien, almost English look, set in a valley not so far from the popular new shrine of Fatima. This was the span of my first journey—from the place of Queen Philippa's marriage to her tomb.

On the way, the figure of Dr. Salazar came alive for me, but slowly. He eschews parades, uniforms and show: he has a monastic secrecy about him and he does not suddenly become clear to the traveller, as Hitler and Mussolini used to do—projected and forced on one, as through a gigantic magnifying glass.

The episodes by which Dr. Salazar came to power are almost forgotten; it is so long ago. In 1926, when Portugal was poor, harassed, and humiliated among her neighbours, a group of army officers took charge and tried to tidy the Government shambles. The economic clutter they found was beyond them, so they summoned Dr. Salazar, aged thirty-seven, to bring order and solvency to the nation's finances. He was then a modest professor at Coimbra University—a devout, celibate, priestly kind of man, but with an incredible genius for economics. His plan to save Portugal's purse was so drastic that the hierarchy of soldiers rejected him, so he retired to his lecture room and his scholars.

Two years later, the soldier government was obliged to summon him again. So he returned from Coimbra to Lisbon, and, from that day, in 1928, he has ruled the land; but, unlike Hitler or Mussolini, for he remains a remote ascetic, out of love with his own fame. He allows only one man to photograph him. "I have never flattered men or masses," he has said. He has no balcony from which to quell a crowd, or from which to enjoy the jubilee of



THE TOMB OF KING JOHN AND QUEEN PHILIPPA OF PORTUGAL AT BATALHA.

their cheers. He has said; "These good people who cheer me one day, may rise in rebellion next day. . . . If I were swayed by the enthusiasm of the multitude or even by my friends, I should no longer be *myself*." And, with apparent sincerity, "I entertain no ambitions. There is in me no wish to rise higher and I consider that at the right time another should take my place."

On the way from Oporto to Batalha, by sea and land, I talked to many people. I had been told that there were secret informers in Portugal, hiding behind screens and hedges, to note down any grumbles against the Salazar régime. I found no furtive shyness among those I questioned. A few miles from Batalha I dined and slept at an inn, and talked to a lawyer, the innkeeper, and the waiter. The waiter said: "Salazar lives as simply as I do: indeed, more so, for I enjoy my alcohol and my tobacco. Once, during the war, when we were very short of coal in Portugal, the Duke of Palmella used to call on Dr. Salazar

and found him with no fire in his room and a rug about his legs. There was a spare rug beside him. The Duke protested, 'Really, this is going too far. You, of all people, should have a fire.' Dr. Salazar answered, 'You and I must be the last people to have a fire. Take this rug and cover yourself well, and tell me what you have come to see me about.'

"Yes," said the innkeeper. "He is a philosopher; a serene man without any passions."

I said to the lawyer, "The traveller sees only the best, provided he travels fast: you seem to be a contented people in this part of Portugal." He answered, "Yes, we know that it is better to have a good republic than a bad monarchy; although I would always prefer a good monarchy to a bad republic. But you will find that we do not have a great preoccupation for politics; we have become a balanced people. If there are Communists here, we do not see them. A Communist would be a ridiculous person in modern Portugal."

The innkeeper then said, "I am the oldest of all of us. I can remember what was, thirty years ago. When you are old, you learn not to demand, but to compare, and I am thankful for what has happened to Portugal."

Before I left the inn next day, a letter arrived, announcing the time when I was to appear at Dr. Salazar's little fortress. I shared a farewell bottle of wine with the lawyer. The innkeeper brought the glasses and explained that the waiter was going down to the beach to bathe. We saw him, a minute later, carrying a bathing costume that might have covered the pale shyness of a Victorian girl. "That," said the lawyer, "is a curious sign of the puritanical laws that Salazar has imposed upon us. When we bathe we must be covered

almost from neck to knee. There are inspectors to see that we do so. I will tell you a story, of a priest, who preached a sermon on modesty to twenty young students in a seminary. Afterwards, they went to the beach, removed their cassocks, and played football in their shorts. The priest was arrested."

I then asked my friends—the waiter, the innkeeper, and the lawyer—what questions they would ask Dr. Salazar if they suddenly found themselves sitting beside him on a sofa. The waiter answered; "I cannot imagine such a situation—myself on a sofa, next to Salazar. I would be without words." The innkeeper said he could think of no questions, but the lawyer said, "I can think of a hundred."

"Make it three," I answered.

The lawyer searched into his lifted wine glass with the air of a true thinker, and answered, slowly: "I would ask him, 'What is your conception of liberty and equality?' I would ask, 'What is the present great international problem?' and 'What world philosophy would you propagate to combat men's potentiality to destroy the world with atomic energy?'"

With this load of interrogation in store for the Prime Minister, I set off for Batalha; to the splendid abbey, and the tomb of Queen Philippa.

Her monument is very high and, on top, she lies beside the King—both sculptured in stone. Ladders had to be brought, for the photographer to climb, and it was not until the film was developed and printed that I realized the simple, touching charm of this memorial to an authentic old alliance. The Portuguese King, and the English Queen, are carved, the one holding the other's hand.

I went from Batalha, to Foz do Arelho, on the coast. While I was



THE TREE NAMED SALAZAR.

waiting to see Dr. Salazar, I travelled over the lovely country, stretching towards Lisbon. One evening I came to an immense lordly tree ; so much a lord that the road swerved in a polite curve, to give it the space it deserved. It was a vast old pine, something like a cedar in physique. One imagined its mighty roots, holding the deep earth together.

"That," said the driver, "is the tree we have named Salazar."

We paused, and I enjoyed the sight of the serene, independent old pine, and, in the low fields beside it, olive trees and rushes, seeming to lean through the half-transparent light, towards the tree, which was drawing about it the mystic shadows of the coming night.

Next day I saw the tree in the heat of the brazen sun, when great trucks were hurtling along the road. There

was no hint of mysticism then—no strange evening drawing together, of pine and olives and rushes, in dark silence. Men were busy in the fields, motor-cars sped by, and the tree named Salazar stood clear of the diffusion of the night before—a tree of realism, sheltering the road.

There was no fuss of officials as I arrived at the Prime Minister's summer home ; a stern, gallant little fortress, thrust into the wide estuary of the River Tagus. The view over the water was much the same as Henry the Navigator must have enjoyed, as he fathered the dream of crossing the Atlantic; the dream to which Columbus was heir, at the end of the 15th century. This is the scene, of water and distance, that spreads before Dr. Salazar's windows. A servant opened the gates : he wore no uniform. I drove in and

climbed a few stairs—I recall patterns of beautiful old tiles, bowls of scarlet lilies, and the almost living coolness that exists within thick walls. Then Dr. Salazar, wearing sun glasses as he looked over the estuary. He took them off; he shook my hand and smiled; and, with unaffected courtesy, he led me to his study—a small room, with tubular steel chairs, a desk almost clear of papers, and the prim, impersonal tidiness of a place designed for work. There was none of the ritual I recall of visits to Signor Mussolini in the Palazzo Venezia, or to Mr. Roosevelt at the White House.

It has been said before that one feels like a schoolboy summoned to the headmaster's study when one sits with Dr. Salazar. He is not a man with whom one feels intellectually at one's best; his critical answers come down like a swift guillotine on the neck of one's ideas. I told him of the waiter who would have no questions for him. He smiled. Then I repeated the first of the lawyer's three questions. When I said, "He would like to know your conception of equality and liberty," Dr. Salazar answered, "You must define equality and liberty for me." I felt that he had but a pale appreciation of my mind as I pleaded, "It is not possible in a phrase." From then on, with fine, eager skill, Dr. Salazar interviewed me.

"You were born in New Zealand," he said. "Tell me about it."

I told the Prime Minister of the absorption of Maoris into British ways of living; of their rising birth-rate—three times to-day what it was at the turn of the century—and of the fact that more than 60 per cent. of Maori boys seek higher education.

Dr. Salazar spoke then of the Portuguese colonies. "We try to give them liberty through education; when they have taken their degree, they have a

vote." He added, "In our African colonies, many of the natives do not describe themselves as belonging to a tribe; they say, 'I am Portuguese.'"

I then talked of the enduring bond between Britain and New Zealand in the monarchy. I said, "I do not think it is possible to make Europeans realize the strength of this—the importance—also with Australia and Canada." He answered, "I realize it. Monarchy suits the British psychology and temperament. I do not believe you will ever give it up; monarchy is ingrained in the British; it will never change."

I recalled reading Dr. Salazar's tribute to King Manuel II of Portugal, who was deposed in 1910 at the age of 21. Dr. Salazar wrote of his exile in England: "His life there was characterized by all the virtues of a prince . . . then, when he had become a model of manly, princely, and Portuguese qualities, when he had reached maturity . . . when at last he was fit to become a king, death overtook him. . . ."

Remembering this statement, I asked Dr. Salazar if the presence of the Pretender—Don Duarte Nono—in Portugal was any sign that the monarchy might still be restored. He answered that the Pretender lives as a private citizen in his country. I asked then, "Do you think that some day the monarchy might be restored?" He answered no more than "Maybe."

We talked then of the old British trading families in Oporto, and of Mr. Maxwell Graham, head of the celebrated wine family, saying to me in Oporto, "I hope you will appreciate what we have done"—associating himself with the régime as if he belonged to it; although he wore an Old Etonian tie and carried a Brigg walking-stick. I asked Dr. Salazar, "Does your government resent the presence of these Englishmen?" And he answered, "No."

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I said, "It is a sort of practical Christianity that allows the alien to prosper within your gates." He seemed to like the phrase, "practical Christianity," for he repeated it several times.

Like so many men with lively imagination, Dr. Salazar moved his hands—articulate, cared-for hands—when he spoke; as if speech was not sufficient outlet for the crowd of his ideas. When I told him that the waiter at the inn had said, "I thank God my wife has no vote: it would only increase the difficulties in the home," Dr. Salazar laughed, with both voice and hands, and said, "Laws must be made within the psychology of the people. In England you can have a Conservative husband and a wife who votes Labour. This would not be possible within the psychology of the Portuguese: therefore, to keep the family peace, no women have the vote, except widows, all who are heads of families, and those with university degrees."

I asked Dr. Salazar if he realized the good that might be done if he visited England, where he is so much respected. I said: "The apostles of anger fly backwards and forwards all the time. For the rest of the world, it would be a healthy episode if you would make a journey to England, where you would be welcomed, as an example of what leadership can be."

He assured me that it was an "illusion" of my own, that he was an "example." I protested. "I have thought of this for several days; that your immaculate life affects all the conduct—the kindness and manners—of Portugal." He said, "No, the Portuguese are born with a deep religious sense that affects their behaviour. Their kindness and manners arise from within them: they are not imposed on them by the State, or by what you call my 'example.'"

I then told the Prime Minister that I



DR. OLEVEIRA SALAZAR.

had recently been to Pakistan. From then, he shot so many questions at me that I was fully occupied in answering them, and my own queries were forgotten.

My promised half-hour had become almost an hour and a half. When I rose to say good-bye, I told him the story of the tree named Salazar. He seemed pleased and said, "Yes, I used to sit in the shade of that tree they have named after me." I then described the tree as I had seen it, in the mists of the evening, and in the practical light of daytime, and I asked, "Can mysticism and realism also be reconciled in one man?" He laughed and said, "Yes, yes, yes, yes," with lively conviction.

Then, with attentiveness I shall never forget, he led me down the stairs and waited at the door as I drove off along the coast, to Lisbon.

HECTOR BOLITHO.

EISENHOWER AT MID-TERM

By DENYS SMITH

DURING the month of January, Eisenhower outlined his programme for the second half of his Presidential term in one general, and a number of special, messages to Congress. These messages show that the President has accepted two big deadlocks; the political deadlock in the United States and the diplomatic deadlock in the world. The political deadlock means that the President must try and get along with the Democrats who control Congress; the diplomatic deadlock means that the United States must try and get along in a world which also includes the Russians and Chinese. The parallel can be pushed too far, since there have been no indications that the Russian and Chinese leaders will adopt the same reasonable approach as the Democratic leaders to Eisenhower's lack of belligerence. Yet in each case there is an enforced co-existence, though this does not mean a movement to abandon party (or national) principles and find a compromise formula which will end all tensions and differences. Party tensions and differences will continue, just as tensions and differences between the Western and Communist worlds will continue.

The President's aim is to make the best of both situations, not to make them worse. His speeches and statements have therefore been deliberately muted. There have been no fierce trumpet-blasts to rally Republicans against Democrats or stir up Americans against Communists. Yet the President remains steadfast in his Republican philosophy and adheres rigidly to the principles and objectives of his foreign policy. In fact the two have

their roots in the same soil; the belief that man is "divinely endowed with dignity and worth and inalienable rights," is a creature "a little lower than the angels." On the domestic side this means that the President supports all measures which enable individual initiative to have full play, and in foreign affairs it means that he can conceive of no compromise with Communist theory, which he considers treats man as "a soulless animated machine, to be enslaved, used and consumed by the State for its own glorification." In dealing with domestic policy Eisenhower expanded the deceptively simple Jeffersonian maxim that the best government is the least government into two guiding rules: "First, the federal government should perform an essential task only when it cannot otherwise be adequately performed; and, second, in performing that task our government must not impair the self-respect, freedom and incentive of the individual."

The President has called himself a "moderate progressive." (One of his supporters has defined an "immoderate progressive" as one who believes in "guaranteed unemployment with a full annual wage.") The title might equally be given the now dominant section of the Democratic Party, who come mainly from the South. That is why co-operation should be easy. But the other wing of the Democratic Party is represented on the Democratic National Committee, and the statements which it issues are strongly critical of the President. People used to talk and write about the "Roosevelt Revolution," the title of a book on the New Deal published in 1933. The ideas of

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the New Deal were carried forward by Truman in his Fair Deal. The first two years of Eisenhower's Presidency might be called a mild counter-revolution. The swing towards the growing concentration of power in Washington and the extension of government control over business and the individual was checked. So was the growing influence of organized labour on national policy. Neither of these trends had pleased the Right-wing Democrats who now are dominant in Congress. In combination with the Republicans they were at times able to apply the brake. Eisenhower put the national machine into reverse. Now this phase is over and during the next two years the machine moves forward in the "moderate progressive" direction. Another way of looking at it is to say that during his first two years Eisenhower was preoccupied with the mistakes of his Democratic predecessors. Now, at mid-term, he must deal with the problems of the future. He could not have expected the Democrats to co-operate with him in criticizing themselves, but there is no reason why he cannot expect their Right wing to co-operate with him on a programme which they themselves might have advocated in his place. The first response of many Democratic members of Congress to his new programme was that he had borrowed it from the Democrats, which puts them in this dilemma; either they vote for it and help Eisenhower or they vote against it and harm themselves. The extreme Right wing of the Republican Party represented by the McCarthy faction dislike this idea of co-operation, but the President has been helped by its decline. McCarthy no longer leads an "ism" but a "wasm."

Eisenhower will not have completely plain sailing and the main trouble will come in a field in which he is an expert, military policy. The President's defence

programme involves a reduction in total manpower combined with a more effective reserve base and increased emphasis on nuclear weapons. The confusion is not so much over what the programme is as over why it is. At one point the Secretaries of Defence and of State appeared to be giving contradictory explanations. Mr. Wilson talked about the diminishing chances of war, while Mr. Dulles insisted that the threat was just as great, though technical advances made possible new and more economical ways of meeting it. But the contradiction was only on the surface. Allied strength and unity has now reached a point where a quick Communist victory would be impossible, which is what Mr. Wilson meant; but the threat is just as great, though the means of meeting it have improved, which is what Mr. Dulles meant. The implications of the new defence policy run contrary to pressures from abroad to avoid atomic war at all costs. No American, however, faced with the question "In what military asset are we at a disadvantage?" and knowing the obvious answer "Manpower," could be expected to reach the conclusion "Therefore let us rely on it"; or to put the proposition the other way "In what military asset are we superior?" and knowing the answer is "Science and industry, which have given us superior nuclear power," could be expected to conclude "Therefore let us ignore it." As the President said in an explanatory letter to Wilson: "Because America's most precious possession is the lives of her citizens, we should base our security upon military formations which make maximum use of science and technology in order to minimize numbers in men."

The strategic concept behind the new military planning was explained by the President as: "We can never be

defeated so long as our relative superiority in productive capacity is sustained." Hence, by building up "a combination of effective retaliatory power and a continental defence system of steadily increasing effectiveness," the enemy would be deterred from an atomic attack and the means to blunt one, should it come nevertheless, be available. The strategic concept was explained more fully by Dulles who made it plain that "our" productive capacity included that of Europe. Europe's productive capacity made it "a prize of such unique value" to an aggressor that defence plans for Europe were based on the need to halt him at the threshold. The situation was different in the Far East; the United States was withdrawing troops deployed there. While it had no intention of reducing its six divisions in Europe, it would not be possible to conduct a peripheral defence along the whole free world frontier, for that "would mean real strength nowhere and bankruptcy everywhere." Local forces in Asia were intended to look after internal security and guard against local Communist *coups*. The threat of outside invasion was being met by the deterrent of mobile sea and air striking power which would not be confined to the area chosen by the enemy for his attack. Dulles pointed out that this concept was neither wholly new nor wholly American. At the time of the signature of the Korean armistice the sixteen nations fighting there signed a declaration that if the Communist attack were resumed they could not count upon the allied response being confined to Korea alone. The response to external aggression would be commensurate with its size and nature. The retaliatory striking force would not necessarily be atomic. Dulles stated: "The present policies will gradually involve the use of atomic weapons as conventional

weapons for tactical purposes." The President was less specific, maintaining that "normally" the police action type of operation which might be necessary under various Pacific treaties would not mean using atomic weapons, though their use could not be precluded. The President has shown himself to be more conscious than Dulles of the strong emotional reflex outside the United States which puts the use of nuclear and conventional weapons into different moral categories. The related assumption is often made that there is a special danger in atomic, and particularly in hydrogen, weapons themselves which can be removed by conducting no more nuclear experiments. The danger is identified with the weapon and the conclusion reached that by eliminating the weapon you eliminate the danger. The consideration that the real moral crime is aggression itself, not the means taken to repel it, is forgotten.

The critical danger to-day is not the hydrogen bomb but the state of mind among the leaders of the Communist world. They could use manpower in just as viciously destructive a way as nuclear power. When Acheson was Secretary of State he likened Communism to a river which flowed on till it met with natural or man-made barriers. It is useless to appeal to a river's good nature to reverse its flow. It will not stop, but has to be stopped. If the prospects of peace are brighter to-day, it is not because the nature of the Communist river has changed, not because the danger has lessened, but because the ability to meet it has increased. It is no contradiction to say that it will rain more heavily when you go out to-day than yesterday, but you will be drier. All it means is that this time you won't forget your umbrella. Dulles has added another thought to the river metaphor; "Soviet policy is like a powerful stream the surface of

which is sometimes ruffled, sometimes calm, but we cannot judge the force and direction of the current by looking at the surface manifestations." The

moral is that neither cooing noises nor angry sounds from the Kremlin should deflect the West from the policies in which it believes.

DENYS SMITH.

ARISTOTLE'S STAR PUPIL

By VISCOUNT SOULBURY

SEVERAL years ago there was produced in London a play called *Adventure Story*. The author was Terence Rattigan, and there are few more wonderful stories of adventure than the story of Alexander the Great, the hero of this play.

It seems almost incredible that a young man only twenty-three years old, who had recently succeeded to the throne of the small, poor, and semi-civilized kingdom of Macedonia, in the north of Greece, should have been able to lead an army of less than forty thousand men—barely a third of them Macedonians—through hostile country from the Bosphorus to the Indus, a journey of about three thousand miles, and in the space of eleven years destroy the Persian Empire, the strongest Empire in the world, stretching from the Levant to the borders of Afghanistan, and from the Black Sea to Egypt. When he died in Babylon on June 28, 323 B.C., Alexander was the master of the whole of this vast area and of Indian territory between the Hindu Kush and the Jhelum river.

How was it done? Adventure is scarcely the right term for such a tremendous achievement. Alexander was no wandering knight-errant in search of romance, though he ventured his own life often enough, and was wounded four times in the course of his campaigns; nor was he, as the

Roman poet Persius said, *Felix prædo*—a successful bandit.

He was a military genius of the highest order, he commanded the best professional army in the world, which he moved at a speed hitherto unexampled, his plans were thought out to the last detail, and his organization was excellent. Until comparatively modern times no armed forces have ever taken the field so amply furnished with technicians of all kinds, scientists, engineers, architects, surveyors, geographers and, in addition, philosophers, historians and poets, forming a sort of propaganda department. Napoleon followed Alexander's example when he attacked Egypt in 1798, for his army included astronomers, chemists, mineralogists, poets and painters and was equipped with a large library and crates of scientific apparatus and measuring instruments.

Alexander's invasion of Persia was not a sudden inspiration. It was a war of revenge that had been germinating in the minds of the Greeks ever since the Persian attack on Greece and the battle of Marathon one hundred and fifty years earlier. War often sows dragons' teeth. But no campaign against Persia was possible without a secure base of operations, and it took Alexander's father, Philip II of Macedonia, many years of much fighting and more diplomacy to control the

independent city-states of Greece, Athens, Sparta, Thebes and others, any one of whom independently, or in collaboration, could have and probably would have, stabbed him in the back as soon as his face was turned East.

When Philip died at the hand of an assassin in 336 B.C., he had secured the title of Captain-General of Greece and removed most of the danger to his rear, though not all, for on his accession Alexander had to raze Thebes to the ground before he could set out as champion of all Hellas, three years after his father's death, with the splendid troops, experienced officers and highly trained general staff which had been bequeathed to him.

But his father had provided for him an even more valuable asset. It has been said—unfairly—that most of Alexander's success was due to good luck. His real luck was to have been taught at an impressionable age by the greatest intellect in Greece. When he was thirteen years old, Philip appointed as his tutor a man who has had more influence over the thought and science of mankind than any other human being—Aristotle—"the master of those who know." What a master and what a pupil! "My father," said Alexander, "gave me life, but Aristotle showed me how to live well."

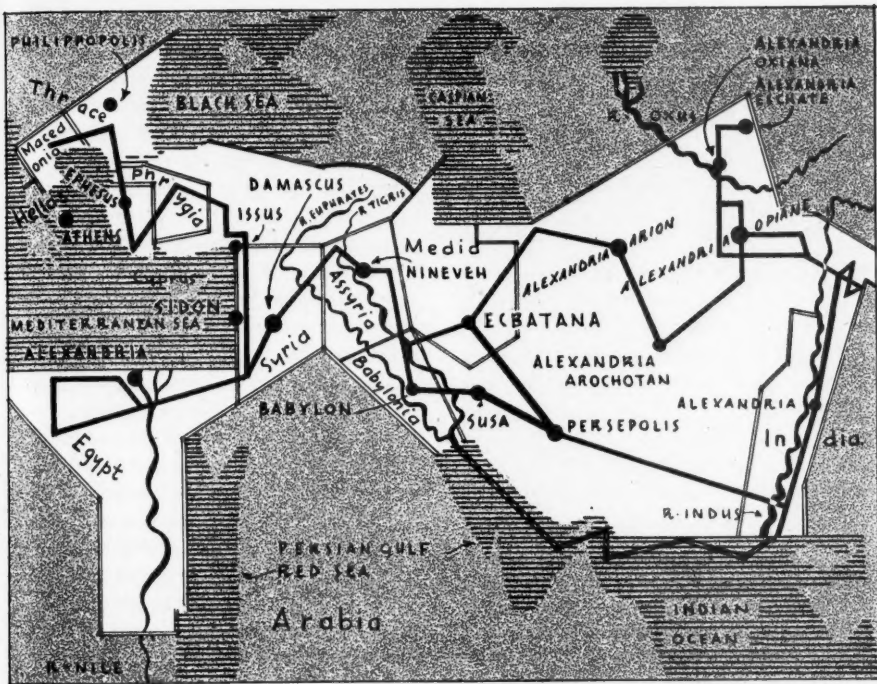
And yet Alexander hated his father, while he adored his mother Olympias, a proud, wild, Balkan Princess, bitterly resentful of the matrimonial irregularities of her husband. It may have been due to the home life of his parents that Alexander was always more or less indifferent to the physical attractions of women and that his relations with them resembled those of mother and son, as in his contacts with Pythia, the Priestess of Apollo, Queen Ada of Caria, and the Queen Mother of Persia, the mother of his conquered enemy Darius. They treated him almost as a

child and he seems to have appreciated it. Perhaps he was an instance of the *Œdipus complex*, and one may wonder what difference it would have made if Aristotle had known something about psycho-analysis. It is also possible that Alexander had taken to heart the warning which Athenæus tells us that Olympias gave to another young Macedonian: "You rascal, you are marrying with your eyes, and not with your intelligence."

Alexander must have been a fascinating boy to teach, though difficult, for his character was a blend of passionate emotional mysticism inherited from his mother, and the practical calculating ruthlessness of his father. Of the actual art of war he could have learnt little from his tutor Aristotle, but of science, ethics, and politics he learnt a great deal, and as events were to show, he was not only a military but a political genius.

Many years ago a Minister of an Indian State said to the Viceroy of India that to conquer a country was easy, but to conquer the hearts of the people was most difficult. Alexander was the first great conqueror to grasp the truth of that observation. To the Greeks the Persians were barbarians to be enslaved or exterminated, and it was Aristotle's view, as it was Plato's before him, that all barbarians, especially those of Asia, were slaves by nature and that the Persians should be regarded as such. He told his pupil to treat the Greeks as friends and the barbarians as animals.

But Alexander was wiser than his master. Of course, on purely military grounds, the conciliation of the peoples of the conquered cities and territories was essential to the maintenance of his long line of communications, but there was a much more profound basis for that policy. For there is good reason to think that it became Alexander's aim



THE EMPIRE OF ALEXANDER THE GREAT, SHOWING HIS LINE OF MARCH.

to unite Greek and Barbarian, to create a partnership between Greece and Persia, to treat all human beings as members of one race and to establish universal peace upon earth. Some five hundred years later the idea of becoming a second Alexander the Great and amalgamating into one state the Romans and the Persians occurred to the Roman Emperor Caracalla (A.D. 211). His object, according to Professor Rostovtseff, was to stem the tide of barbarism which threatened to engulf both the Roman and Parthian Empires. But Alexander's aim was, I think, far more ambitious, for he may well have believed that he had a divine mission to reconcile humanity and to bring about the brotherhood of mankind. Perhaps that great dream was a product of his mother's mysticism, and it was an idea far in advance of contemporary thought. In fact, more

than two thousand years since his death, a similar idea is once again stirring in the minds of men.

That Greece and Persia should be partners was in his day a completely novel conception, and he took practical steps to bring it about. He held at Susa the famous "Wedding of East and West" at which he married Stateira, the daughter of Darius, and made eighty of his most distinguished officers marry the daughters of Persian noblemen. He also married Roxane, the daughter of a Bactrian chief, probably in order to conciliate the frontier barons on the north-east marches of his new dominion. He encouraged mixed marriages and gave handsome dowries to ten thousand of his troops who had already married Asian women, for he realized that there could be no more effective method of bringing two communities into partner-

ship than inter-marriage. He also drafted Persian cavalry into his army and had thirty thousand Persian boys trained to fight in his famous infantry formation, the Phalanx.

Needless to say, his Macedonian generals, mostly Philip's men and brought up in the conservative traditions of Greece, neither sympathized with nor understood his policy. Amongst his nationals, he was the only inter-national. No one before his time had thought in terms of the whole world, and not many have done so since. It is not surprising that he complained of loneliness. But his effort to break down the separatism of nationality had a considerable influence upon the Roman Empire and upon Mediæval Europe. That the modern world has become increasingly conscious of nationalism is not a matter for congratulation.

In Terence Rattigan's very moving prologue to his play, the dying Alexander asks two questions—"Could I have ever turned back?" and "When did it first go wrong?" All who have seen the play will ask those questions and find them difficult to answer.

When Alexander set out on his "adventure," he probably did not aim at more than the capture of the seaboard provinces of Persia and the liberation of the cities on the Mediterranean coast, many of them founded and still inhabited by people of Greek origin. Lack of finance—in his own words he had nothing left but "his hopes"—would have set a limit to more ambitious projects, but no doubt he hoped that a successful expedition would put him in funds, and it did, for about eighteen months after crossing the Dardanelles the battle of Issus and the capture of Darius' war chest, banished all financial difficulties. With that windfall he was able to attempt a complete subjection of the Persian

Empire, and indeed no other course was open to him, if he was to eliminate the perpetual danger of a Persian counter attack for the recovery of the coast of Asia Minor. So when Darius offered to cede to him all the territory west of the Euphrates, and his Chief of Staff, Parmenion, said that if he were Alexander he would accept the offer, the famous repartee, "So would I, if I were Parmenion," was justified.

But could he have turned back before attacking India?—that is, I think, what his question meant—for after reaching the Indus he did turn back; his men would go no further. What made him attack India? After the capture of Ecbatana and the death of Darius he was sovereign of the whole Persian Empire, his troops were tired of the war and clamouring to go home, and the physical difficulties of the approach march were immense. Surely he could have established somewhere west of the Hindu Kush and Afghanistan, and the rivers Jaxartes or Oxus, in what is now Russian Turkistan, a permanent line of defence to cover his new realm, consolidated the conquered territory, reformed its administration and saved the Middle East from the wars of succession that followed his death?

I believe that he would have turned back before invading India if he had known more of the geography of that country, but he was already at the confines of the world of which the Greek geographers had any knowledge. He founded Alexandria Eschatè—Alexandria at the end of the world, the modern Khodjend—and he thought, as did all his contemporaries, that the ocean was only a few days march to the east of the Indus; it is said that when he saw the crocodiles in that river he believed it to be the headwaters of the Nile.

But with his utterly mistaken notions

ARISTOTLE'S STAR PUPIL

of geography, his invasion of India, or what he thought comprised India, would only involve the capture of just one more province and, if he was right about the ocean, would secure for his new Empire the best possible of all frontiers, the sea. So it seems that in the light of his knowledge, or rather lack of knowledge, he had sound military reasons for going on and could not turn back. We cannot blame him for his ignorance of geography, for three hundred years later the historian Diodorus Siculus writes of the supremacy of Rome extending to the boundaries of the inhabited world.

But what about his second question, "When did it first go wrong?" That is more difficult to answer.

Was Alexander just one more instance of the failure of a human being to endure complete success and withstand the intoxicating corruption of unbridled authority? It may be so. Perhaps the turning point in his career was the execution of Parmenion's son Philotas, and the murdering of Parmenion and Cleitus, all three of them "companions" and members of his entourage. It is possible to excuse those deeds in the interests of State, but they were certainly reminiscent of the Oriental potentate which he had become. I think, however, that reasons of policy and not self-aggrandizement prompted him to adopt the style and ceremonial of a Persian King and insist upon the forms of obeisance, genuflection and prostration familiar to an Eastern Court. They were distasteful to his Greek associates, but expected from him by his Persian subjects. He had stepped into the shoes of the Great King and desired to assume the role of his legitimate successor. Resistance then became rebellion.

We are told in the play that Alexander once asked his tutor how a man



ALEXANDER THE GREAT.

Picture Post Library.

could become a God and that Aristotle replied, "By doing what is impossible for a man to do." Alexander may be forgiven for thinking that that was what he had done. As successor to the Pharaohs of Egypt he was worshipped by the Egyptians, and a year before his death he officially requested the Greek cities to treat him as a God. Was that a political manoeuvre like the subsequent deification of the Roman Emperors, or had he become to believe in his own divinity? He claimed descent from Achilles, the son of a sea-nymph, and Heracles, to whom occasionally the Greeks accorded divine honours, and it must be remembered that in Greek mythology there was no very hard and fast line drawn between Gods and men; demi-Gods and heroes filled the gap. To us in the twentieth century, such beliefs seem absurd, but to the ancient world they

were credible, and it may well be that Alexander did believe himself to be a God or, at any rate, to have a far greater share of the "divine spark" than any other living person. Plutarch reports as one of his sayings, "God is the common Father of all men but he makes the best ones peculiarly his own." Anyhow, whatever he believed, his sublime belief in himself explains the stupendous self-confidence which carried him through his career.

Despotism and deification, however, were heavy burdens to bear, and under such burdens sooner or later it was bound to "go wrong." Having reached the summit of the most colossal material success ever achieved by man, it would have been better to settle down to the humdrum but vitally important task of consolidating and administering his immense conquests. But a man's character is his destiny, and it was not in his character to do that, and even if it had been, the terrible mental and physical strain of eleven years of warfare had broken him down. He was tired out and exhausted. He died of a fever which, it has been well said, might have spared him had he known how to spare himself.

It would not, I think, be profitable to speculate on what would have happened if he had lived longer, but the world might well have been very different if he had never lived. He gave his name to the Alexandrian Age—Alexandria remains as a memorial—and he founded at least sixteen other cities. But above all, we owe it to him that for six or seven hundred years the Middle East was permeated by the culture and civilization of Greece. The Greek language was the *Koinè*, the common speech, the *lingua franca*, of the whole area.

Three hundred years after his death that fact became of fundamental importance to Western Europe, for Greek

was the medium by which the New Testament and the doctrines of Christianity were promulgated from Syria to Greece and from Greece to Rome. I do not know what other language St. Paul could have used as the vehicle of his teaching, for in the words of Professor Mahaffy: "It is not enough to say that Greek was the current language of Christianity, it may fairly be said that it was the only language."

And although Alexander's direct influence on India vanished within a generation, there is good reason to think that as a result of his invasion, India too made her contribution to Christianity. Chandragupta saw him and made peace with his successor Seleucus, but Macedonian agents remained at the Court of the Indian King and we know from the inscriptions of his grandson, the Emperor Asoka, that Buddhist missionaries were sent to preach their doctrine to all the Hellenic Kings of the West. To quote Professor Mahaffy once more: "We have no details of their number or of their success, but when you consider that they must have preached in Syria two centuries before Christ, strange likenesses in the life of Buddha to that of the life of Christ assume a new and deep interest." Who can estimate the ultimate consequence, if it be true that Alexander's conquests brought Buddhist teaching into Galilee? We must also remember that India's contact with Greece set in motion a wave of Greek art which profoundly affected Gandhara in Afghanistan, the cradle of Buddhist sculpture.

Alexander was hardly dead when romance and legend and fairy tale became busy with his name and achievements. His story spread all over the world. A Persian poet records that he set steps and chains on the path up Adam's Peak in Ceylon, and a mediæval poem *The Romance of Alexander*, in

lines of twelve syllables, originated the metre known as Alexandrine. But from the Middle Ages onwards he does not seem to have figured largely in the literature either of East or West. One might have expected that the life of such a great man, so full of incident and excitement, would have appealed to poets, dramatists and novelists throughout the ages, and yet, so far as I know, the only important poem in the English language that takes Alexander as its theme is Dryden's *Alexander's Feast*. It is strange that Shakespeare did not find in him material for a tragedy. He drew on North's Plutarch for his classical plays, and Plutarch's life of Alexander must have been

known to him. Perhaps the reason was the lack of any love interest in Alexander's life, though for that matter there is not much of it in *Julius Cæsar*. Anyhow, whatever the reason, we should be grateful that at long last an English playwright has dramatized the career of Alexander the Great not only with consummate skill and subtlety but with astonishing fidelity to the recorded facts of history.

If it be true that "history is philosophy teaching by example," there are many lessons to be learnt from the adventure story of Alexander the Great.

SOULBURY.

ESSAY ON PROSE. II.

By WALTER DE LA MARE

BUT to return to our "moss." Being ourselves human and not mere abstract intellect, we may, if we please, refer to moss as that tiny green cushiony stuff that grows on stones—though not on rolling stones; or as the vegetable vermin that defiles the gravel path; or as the meek and silent witness of the dead. We may, at our own risk, and his, tickle a child's fancy by telling him that the little heart-shaped emerald-green tuft of moss over there among the primroses of a birch-copse is of the secret workmanship of the Silent Folk, and that the Redbreast, at equinoctial daybreak, pecks of it to give himself courage, to sharpen his voice, to win himself a mate and to keep out our English cold. Or one may, if prejudiced, declare that Amabel's cheek is like moss—cool, gentle, gracious, and of the earth, earthy. But every departure, *plus* or *minus*, from our

dictionary definition of moss, gives it a local and personal quality. reference, flavour, truth, virtue, or defect. It signalizes it. This so far as the writer is concerned. The reader can only accept what the words mean to *him*.

Our own matter-of-truth at any rate, should as far as possible—and, as should dream from wake—be clearly distinguishable from matter-of-fancy. And after that perhaps the more matter-of-fancy, the merrier, so long as the former consists as far as this is possible of our own first-hand and ascertained, assured personal experience.

A little girl then who confides to you that she cannot conceive what her teacher meant when she said that William the Conqueror *landed* at Dover in 1066, simply because—as you discover—she has never so much as lifted her sky-blue eyes on the sea, should at once be given a day in Hastings. A little boy who in intellectual pride

stoutly and derisively denies that there ever was a Duke William who landed at all, might be given a whipping. But if to-morrow an accredited historian positively proves to his fellow historians' satisfaction that William never stirred out of Normandy but—continuing in secret to pursue the science and art of alchemy, and the philosopher's stone—sent a more gifted cousin to impersonate him, he may be rewarded by posterity with a garland of bay.

Apart then from the prose that is intended to convey what Coleridge called pure matter-of-fact, or scientific knowledge—and this may be a prose of a very rare quality—there is that which also conveys knowledge of an order based on an experience more or less private and partial and peculiar to its writer, and conveys it in a personal way. It may still be the work of his intellect. But it is also a prose that is beginning to be literature.

There is, however, yet another kind of prose that is not scientific, and is in some degree personal, but which we might hesitate to call literature. It may be termed a standard, or composite prose. In this species of writing the author is speaking not solely for himself, but as representative of his profession, class, council or committee; or as the mouthpiece of some common cause or party. It is a sort of mental and moral literary uniform.

So engrossed, for example, is the language of the Law in being exact that to the innocent and ignorant it is all but unintelligible. Can these dry bones live? we cry. They can; but at a price. In this kind of prose that perilous but, at times, winning personal pronoun, *I*, is usually translated into the passive mood or submerged in the frigid security of a *We*. But not always.

Many years ago, there used to be a simple little proclamation affixed to a

notice-board near Victoria railway station which I never failed to ponder over at every opportunity. Indeed, I memorized it. It ran as follows: "I, Ernest Ridley Colbourne Bradford, Commissioner of Police for the City of London, do hereby appoint a standing for two hackney carriages."

What prose could better that?—so crisp, so lucid, so final, so austere? Thus might a Pope appoint archbishops. The enchantment, the exquisite flower however was still to come. There followed these three words: "HORSES HEADS EASTWARD." At which not only had the Commissioner himself miraculously "come alive" but so had the stony world I shared with him. Seldom indeed does prose of this order remind us of the Three Wise Kings or summon before our eyes a beatific vision of daybreak.

Government departments, plenipotentiaries, diplomatists, boards, councils, societies, academies, dignitaries and all those of our fellow creatures who in the course of being alive and official have acquired a fourth skin, are ready experts in this corporate order of prose. So also in their less modest and more seductive fashion are advertisers of the elegant, company-promoters, candidates for election, Johns-in-office. In such a prose, of the finest quality, Ministers of the Crown may still address, and certainly used to address, an attentive House of Commons. And not always quite grammatically—as William Cobbett delighted to demonstrate—the Duke of Wellington his favourite quarry.

It is a prose that sustains a certain level of propriety and dignity, if not of pomposity. And it is an admirable means of concealing one's meaning, or one's intention of meaning nothing in particular. For this reason it distrusts Anglo-Saxon, and seldom uses a little word if three or four long ones will

suffice. Slow, solemn, and circuitous, it shuns excess and excitement, and we expect of it neither grace nor charm, no flash of fancy, wit or humour. As a literary vehicle it resembles a rather old-fashioned omnibus. Its frigidity at times might well prove mortal to a really sensitive soul.

To become prose in any finer sense it must be more candid, sensuous, supple, various. It must be humanized. How? Chiefly by showing some trace of feeling, by revealing not merely that it is the work of many capable hands, but also of one capable and sensitive heart.

Whether or not, indeed, it is true that in a mixed company the talk tends to drop to the level of the least intelligent member of it—and Committee-meetings seem at times to suggest this—it is undeniable that the emotional pitch is then usually low. Let one voice utter a word of vivid feeling, of rage, enthusiasm, contempt or despair, let one face light up with a burning ardour, it is as if a match has been struck in a powder magazine.

As, too, with the changing expression of a man's face, his gestures and the music and cadences of his voice, so with his writing. At its most serene, it will reflect a mind more or less at rest, but still an individual mind—a ceremonious Gibbon, a sententious Johnson, a caustic Hume, a gracious Addison, a downright Cobbett, an amiable Hunt, an urbane Newman, a cultured Arnold, a suave Walter Pater. But when it is troubled, edged, heated with feeling and emotion, it reveals the very heart and spirit; it strips off a man's armour, puts a sword in his hand. It is a revelation of his many-sided humanity. The knowledge or thought, or ideas it conveys are thus suffused with what seals them in this context his own. The mere knowledge can be extracted and enshrined in an encyclopædia; the feeling, as the words

reveal it in every turn and cadence, can flow on only from one sensitive heart to another.

When we pity, we are not ourselves *plus* compassion, but a self become compassionate. We cannot—whatever medicine may achieve with our glands, or whatever poisons emotion may excrete on our skins—we cannot extract essence of indignation from an angry man. His anger is a condition of his whole being at some particular moment—a sea in storm. So too, in the expression of that anger in his prose. The emotion is implicit in the words, and is revealed not only by his choice of them, by his symbols, but by the fall, and accord of the rhythms, the music, and energy of his sentences.

Yet, clear-sighted writers have been curiously blind at times to this fact. "I hate all idiosyncrasy," said Hazlitt. Yet so idiosyncratic is Hazlitt's style that we can recognize it almost at a glance. The word "hate" in such a context is in itself idiosyncratic. And again Macaulay. "The first rule of all writing—the rule to which everything is subordinate—is that the words used by the writer shall be such as most fully and precisely convey his meaning to the great body of his readers." Should not however this rule be rather that the words used by a writer should be such as most fully and precisely conveyed his meaning to himself, using his complete intelligence for that purpose?

So again Southey: "My sole endeavour," he says, "is to write plain English and to put my thoughts into language which everyone can understand." But the plainest English may be exceedingly condensed and profound, and (as for example the first chapter of St. John's Gospel) may be extremely difficult fully to comprehend; and how is it possible that "everyone" can completely grasp the thoughts and feelings

of any other man—especially if that man should be Plato, Shakespeare, Kant, St. Thomas Aquinas. To write for everyone is therefore to write down to someone. We cannot write *up* to anyone, even to ourselves with much effect.

There may be misconceptions at the other extreme. "Style, after all," says Alexander Smith, "style, rather than thought is the immortal thing in literature." But thought however important it may be is only one element in literature, and the immortal thing in literature is not style, but the pure and convincing witness which that style surrenders to the mind and spirit of the human being responsible for it.

A prose, worthy of the name of literature, then, signally reveals its writer, whatever its elements may be. It may be a poor thing but it is his own. It is (as a composition) unique. Within certain limits then, the more original the writer, the rarer and finer his powers of mind, the more sound and sensitive he is as a human being, so much the more valuable as literature will be his prose.

This being so, the basis of a sound prose as a means of communication is, first, understanding and intelligence—that complex faculty of the mind which welcomes, scrutinizes, profits by, uses, and adds to human knowledge; and next, it is feeling or emotion—delight, affection, enthusiasm: humour, pity, passion—to warm, enlighten, persuade, win over, move and humanize.

There is, however, yet another element, and a capital one. Observing that quickness of mind and flexibility of intelligence are the essential qualities of a sound literary prose—a prose still essentially prosaic—Matthew Arnold remarked that, since these qualities are especially characteristic of the French as a nation, we must look for it to the French rather than to the English, whose conspicuous quality is poetic

energy or genius. And genius, in Dr. Johnson's words, is "that quality without which judgment is cold, and knowledge is inert; that energy which collects, combines, amplifies and animates." In one word, the imagination.

But who shall define it? Which "faculty" of the mind is never unaided by it? It is in the first place, related to the means whereby we are enabled to recall sensuous images. And not of course merely visual images, but what also we have heard, touched, tasted, smelt, and all else that we have accumulated of "the past" in mind and memory, as the bee stores honey for the winter. If this memory be of something seen we focus upon it what is called the inward eye. If it be the memory of something heard we hear it again in the inward ear in echo in the mind. I say "rainy lilac," and for the moment it is spring again. I say "slate pencils," and the elderly among us are probably for the moment instantly and not perhaps too happily back at school again. Indeed our consciousness of any such past experience thus made present may be so powerful as even to obliterate the sensations of external actuality. It may almost amount to an hallucination. If we attempt to express it in words, the result will be in this particular degree and sense not only a personal, but an imaginative prose. The born naturalist, the diarist, the writer of travels, the fine journalist, all vivid describers, have this pictorial, keen, quick, direct life-giving faculty. It may be a prose plain and simple. It may rival Solomon in all his glory. Such men as Darwin, Boswell, Galton, Ruskin, Pepys, Hudson, keen observers all, skilled in keeping eye, ear and mind on the object, and possessed of a vivid sensuous memory—all such writers as these—are in their degree masters of this kind of

ESSAY ON PROSE. II.

prose. Thus must have talked the Elizabethan seamen who waited on Hakluyt on their coming back to England again from the ends of the earth. Their telling so vividly what they have seen, enables us as vividly to see what they tell.

The more intimate as well as vivid, indeed, and the more endeared to him, a writer's memories may be, so much the more feelingly and heedfully and happily will this sensuous imagination play its part in his prose, and so with the shocking, the terrifying, the malign. The prose of autobiography, especially that concerned with childhood, wells over with its influences. Indeed, it is perhaps a man's acute awareness of the differences between his own views and experiences of life and those of the world at large or derived at second hand which impels him into relating his experiences, his "life." Examples of this order of imaginative prose written by a child are therefore rare. And his elders may be little inclined to listen to it *viva voce*. And yet the liveliest evidence of experiences vividly recalled peeps out of this letter to her Aunt Isa from Marjorie Fleming—Walter Scott's playmate Pet Marjorie.

Docile, loving, petulant, rebellious, remorseful, indefatigably herself, she was the youngest human being to attain a niche in the Dictionary of National Biography. She died when she was eight.

My dear Isa,—I now sit down to answer all your kind and beloved letters which you was so good as to write to me. This is the first time I ever wrote a letter in my life. There are a great many girls in the Square and they cry just like a pig when we are under the painful necessity of putting it to death. Miss Potune, a Lady of my acquaintance, praises me dreadfully. . . . This horrid fat simpliton says that my Aunt (the aunt she is writing to) is beautiful which is entirely impossible for that is not her nature. . . .

And again:

My dear little Mama,—I was truly happy to hear that you are well. *We* are surrounded with measles at present on every side, for the Herons got it, and Isabella Heron was near Death's Door, and one night her father lifted her out of bed, and she fell down as they thought lifeless. Mr Heron said,—“That lassie's deed noo.” “I'm no deed yet.” She then threw up a big worm nine inches and a half long.

There can be no denying that in these childish letters we catch a remarkably lively glimpse of Marjorie Fleming's sensuous image of a dying pig, of the squealing girls in the Square, of poor Mr. Heron, of that horrid fat “simpliton” Miss Potune, and of that grisly worm. But how about her “Death's Door”? What image of that cold threshold do we share with her—a threshold which she herself was to cross, alone, but a year or two afterwards.

And here is William Hazlitt's first letter, addressed when he was eight by Hazlitt to his father, then on the other side of the Atlantic.

12th Nov. (1786)

My dear Papa,—

I shall never forget that we (the English, he means) came to America. If we had not come to America, we should not have been away from one another, though now it can not be helped. I think for my part that it would have been a great deal better if the white people had not found it out. Let the others have it to themselves, for it was made for them. I have got a little of my grammar; sometimes I get three pages and sometimes but one. I do not sifer any at all. Mamma Peggy and Jacky are all very well, and I am to.—I still remain your most affectionate son

WILLIAM HAZLITT.

Apart from the surprising pessimism (or sagacity) of certain passages in this letter, what an exquisite candour

and modesty shine out in it. "I do not sifer any at all"—one stares down clean into the black vacuum called Mathematics in that young mind. And as for its "still"—I still remain

your most affectionate son—Cleopatra herself can never have tasted subtler unction.

WALTER DE LA MARE.

To be concluded.

FIFTY YEARS AGO

IN February, 1905, *The National Review* contained an unsigned and rather portentous article on "The Servant Problem." The following extracts will show that complaints about the shortage of domestic "help" are not peculiar to the present age.

The disorganization of domestic service has so seriously affected home comforts and social life in recent years, that no apology is necessary for dealing again with a subject which has already attracted a considerable amount of attention. Yet in reviewing the domestic situation, the causes of the evil and its possible cure, extremes are to be avoided. The growing unpopularity in the situation by those who maintain that this is but a passing phase of no serious import; while those who foretell in present difficulties the extinction of the servant race, and a further sign of the degeneracy of the English people, will be interested to hear of a domestic crisis of equal magnitude occurring more than a hundred and fifty years ago. Literature of that period abounds with instances of the insolence of English servants, and of their independence of their masters, whose service they left on the slightest provocation. . . . Few will deny that the present crisis equals in magnitude that of earlier times. The difficulties of well ordering a household are evident when work must be carried out according to servants' theories rather than the mistresses' views, and when servants will leave on the merest pretext not with the legitimate object of bettering their position but because a place is dull or they

require a change. The experience of those wishing to set up an English establishment in these days most clearly illustrated the domestic difficulty. Interviews in which the mistress is far more interviewed than interviewing, and inquiries on the part of applicants for the situation as to numbers in family, servants kept and visitors allowed, clearly show there are more situations to fill than there are servants to fill them. Questions from the lady's maid as to the ultimate destination of the wardrobe; minute inquiries of the housemaid as to Sunday and week-day outings, accompanied by a distinct proviso against opening the door in the butler's absence, prove that the final decision whether the girl enters the situation rests rather with her than with the mistress, while the terms dictated by kitchen maid and footman, where no scullery maid or hall boy is kept, are only credible when it is remembered that this class of servant is almost impossible to procure. . . . It is obvious there are gradations of troubles in various households. Wise management, no doubt, lessens the tension between mistress and maid, but even those who have been most successful in the ordering of their houses, and have hitherto kept their servants for years, are sensible of changes in the domestic situation. The chief difficulties are for those in medium-sized establishments, where there is more coming and going, and more entertaining than in earlier days, and the same staff kept. It is almost impossible in these places to get well trained and single-handed servants of a certain age.

BOOKS NEW AND OLD

SLEUTHS AT WORK *

By ERIC GILLETT

THE art of literary detection can be and often is most rewarding. In recent years Professor J. L. Lowes, Roger Lubbock and Alan Keen, and Miss Marchette Chute are only a few of the inquirers into past mysteries who have written valuable and entertaining studies and so qualified for election to the Literary Detectives' Club. During the past months or so there has been an outburst of great activity. Three new books have reached me recently, and in one of them, the most important and certainly the most sensational, I feel that the author, Mr. Richard Aldington, and his publishers, Messrs. Collins, a firm of the highest repute, have broken the accepted rules of good taste and proper procedure. Certain sensational newspapers do not hesitate to print "revelations" and "confessions" by notorious people, which must hurt relations and friends who are alive. Many of these pieces are the work of "ghosts." It was surprising that Dr. Thomas Jones, in his *Diary with Letters*, prints an allusion to the Lawrence family, which should have been omitted.

Lawrence of Arabia: A Biographical Enquiry is by a most accomplished man of letters, a poet, the author of at least one very good novel, *Death of a Hero*, and several impressive biographies and anthologies. The last book of his to come my way was a notably ill-tempered book about Norman Douglas. If Lawrence had to be "debunked" I wish that someone else, a writer cool and dispassionate, had done the job, and I cannot imagine why Mr. Aldington's publishers did not wait a few years before bringing out a book,

which is bound to inflict pain and the most unwelcome publicity upon Lawrence's closest relative, who is still alive. *Lawrence of Arabia* gives details of her own past life which one is bound to accept. If they are not true the publishers have laid themselves open to very heavy legal penalties. It is all very well to say that the facts have long been no secret to various people who know the Lawrence family. They were not known to the general public, and they should not have been set down in book form until those who will be hurt are no longer here to suffer.

With this protest, and I am making it as strongly as I can, I turn to the book itself. It is one of the most fascinating, distressing, and extraordinary things I have ever read. One is bound to acquit the author of malice aforethought after reading his introductory letter to Mr. Alister Kershaw, who suggested the idea to him. It seems that Mr. Aldington was in search of a suitable subject for a biography. Earlier he wrote a lively study of the Iron Duke. He found him much more attractive and interesting than he had expected. Then Mr. Kershaw came along and suggested that Mr. Aldington should gratify his admiration for a

* *Lawrence of Arabia. A Biographical Enquiry.* By Richard Aldington. Collins. 25s.

The First Night of "Twelfth Night." By Leslie Hotson. Hart-Davis. 21s.

Flight of the Skylark. The Development of Shelley's Reputation. By Sylva Norman. Reinhardt. 25s.

The King's Peace, 1637-1641. By C. V. Wedgwood. Collins. 25s.

The Cotswolds. (Regional Books.) By Edith Brill. Hale. 18s.

A Kite's Dinner. Poems, 1938-54. By Sheila Wingfield. Cresset Press. 9s. 6d.

hero by writing a life of Lawrence. Mr. Aldington demurred. He jibbed at the amount of research to be done, and protested his dislike of military heroes. He pleaded that Lawrence's life had been written several times already. "I started on my task," he writes, "with doubts of my ability to perform it worthily, but certainly with the hope of investigating a hero and his deeds."

"Started," yes, perhaps, but when he discovered, and it appears that he made the discovery early on in his researches, that Lawrence's assertion in 1922, and again in 1925, that he had been offered the post of High Commissioner for Egypt was untrue. Mr. Aldington admits that as further inquiries proved that the Egypt affair was not a "regrettable exception," but just one more "example of a systematic falsification," the scope of his projected book was insensibly changed. "It became a biographical enquiry, the facts for which had to be tracked down with the minute care of a literary detective." All very right and proper, no doubt, but was it really necessary for him to print on his title page the mocking little quotation from *The Importance of Being Earnest*—

Untruthful! My nephew Algernon?
Impossible! He is an Oxonian.

and to imply a sneer almost whenever he mentions Oxford? It is a very small matter, but a writer who can be intemperate in a little thing apparently without any reason—Mr. Aldington was at London University—cannot be read with entire confidence when he is dealing with much more important matters. It is only fair to add that he has clearly taken the greatest possible trouble, almost everywhere, to check his facts. They constitute a most formidable arraignment, and in Mr. Aldington's own words, "the national

hero turned out to be at least half a fraud." This is an understatement. He adds that it was a most invidious and disagreeable task to reveal the truth about "a terrific blow by fate, some humiliating and painful wound which Lawrence was always trying to compensate," in fact, the family matter which was at the root of his carefully posed life and always calculated behaviour. "If I have been guilty of bad taste," Mr. Aldington admits, "well, I have been; but I have not betrayed anyone's confidence, the facts I discovered entirely by my own researches." I cannot agree with him when he says that he has "presented the evidence as objectively and quietly as possible." I think his temperament made it impossible for him to do anything of the kind. When suspicion was added to suspicion and proof succeeded proof to corroborate his dawning idea that Lawrence was not what people thought he was, his enjoyment of the chase grew, and the book's temper alters as chapter follows chapter. There is a kind of "Ha! Ha! Among the Trumpets" atmosphere towards the close which is painful, and at the end when he has stripped Lawrence almost bare of everything he was thought to possess, he employs the horrid words "Lawrence was the appropriate hero for his class and epoch. *Requiescat*."

This is hardly the considered judgment of a well-balanced biographer, though it may be Mr. Aldington's own peculiar way of indicating that he has suffered just one more disillusionment in an age which has little else to offer him except disillusionment.

On the credit side Mr. Aldington's research, tireless industry, martalling of great masses of material, and entire readability deserve high praise. Perhaps he may like to have one small item, though it comes from Oxford, to add to his astonishing catalogue of

SLEUTHS AT WORK

Lawrence's mystifications. Some of these were innocent. Others definitely were not. My example is.

In 1919 or 1920 a friend, one of the four undergraduate Bible Clerks of All Souls, was in my rooms at Lincoln and noticed that I had all the works of *Saki*, at that time very difficult to obtain. He told me that Lawrence was most anxious to re-read them. Delighted at any chance of getting into touch with the great man and very keen to meet him, I said that my friend could borrow them for him or that I would take them to All Souls myself. Next day my friend returned. He said that Lawrence would like to collect them from my shelves one by one and would return them, never keeping any book for more than five days.

This happened over and over again. I never saw Lawrence come or go, and neither did the college porter. I asked him to keep an eye open for him, but it is a fact that no one in Lincoln ever saw Lawrence. My friend swore that he did not take the books to Lawrence, and I have no idea who could have removed and returned them except Lawrence himself. It may interest some people to know that his favourite seemed to be *Beasts and Superbeasts*. It vanished three times, and the *Chronicles of Clovis* went twice. What a curious, meaningless thing to do, and in the light of Mr. Aldington's book, how typical!

I have deliberately omitted to quote from *Lawrence of Arabia*, neither have I attempted to give a synopsis. In spite of the fact that its publication to-day is not in accordance with my idea of good taste I can only say that it is a book to read—sooner or later.

Dr. Leslie Hotson, who specializes in finding out remarkable things about the Elizabethan dramatists and their writings and has an unequalled knack of uncovering fascinating -ana that

have lain hidden for centuries, has just returned from his latest enterprise, an inquiry into *The First Night of "Twelfth Night"* with notable treasure. His various arguments and conclusions are too long to go into here. They are convincing enough and set forth in most beguiling style. To begin with, he poses a few questions:

What chance have we of conjuring up some of the atmosphere of that first night, of catching a glimpse of its moment in time? . . . We cannot help asking, Must every lost thing remain lost? May no corner of the dark curtain of oblivion be lifted? Or is it possible that materials be put together to make a guide-post to rediscovery of some part of that lost land?

Fifty years ago a German Shakespearean, Gregor Sarrazin, got hold of a clue. In the winter of 1600-1 a certain Duke Orsino was in London and was Ambassador to the English Court. He was entertained by Queen Elizabeth with terrific pomp and festivity on Twelfth Night.

With this magnificent clue to work on, Professor Hotson has woven a story which is at least as fascinating as anything spun from recent researches into the records of the time. It introduces an elegant Spanish hero, a stolid Muscovite Ambassador, and a Queen whose Machiavellian statecraft is occupied, as is clearly shown here, on one of the most ingenious and amusing plays that even she can have undertaken.

Having described all this, Dr. Hotson is able to elucidate the text of *Twelfth Night*, and extract clear meanings from lines which have been considered up to now to be either baffling or nonsensical. The brain is inclined to reel a little as piece after piece falls into place in this bewildering jigsaw puzzle. One thing only strains my credulity, and that is how, by all that's wonderful,

did Shakespeare manage to write the most beautiful, the most romantic and poetic of the world's comedies in the short time he had at his disposal. Lovers of *Twelfth Night* cannot afford to miss this enchanting piece of research. When they have done so they will doubt no longer that Malvolio got what he deserved, because his original was the pompous and amorous Sir William Knollys, Comptroller of the Household, notorious at the time for his infatuation with the flighty Mary or Mall Fitton. Here, indeed, is splendid matter for a May morning.

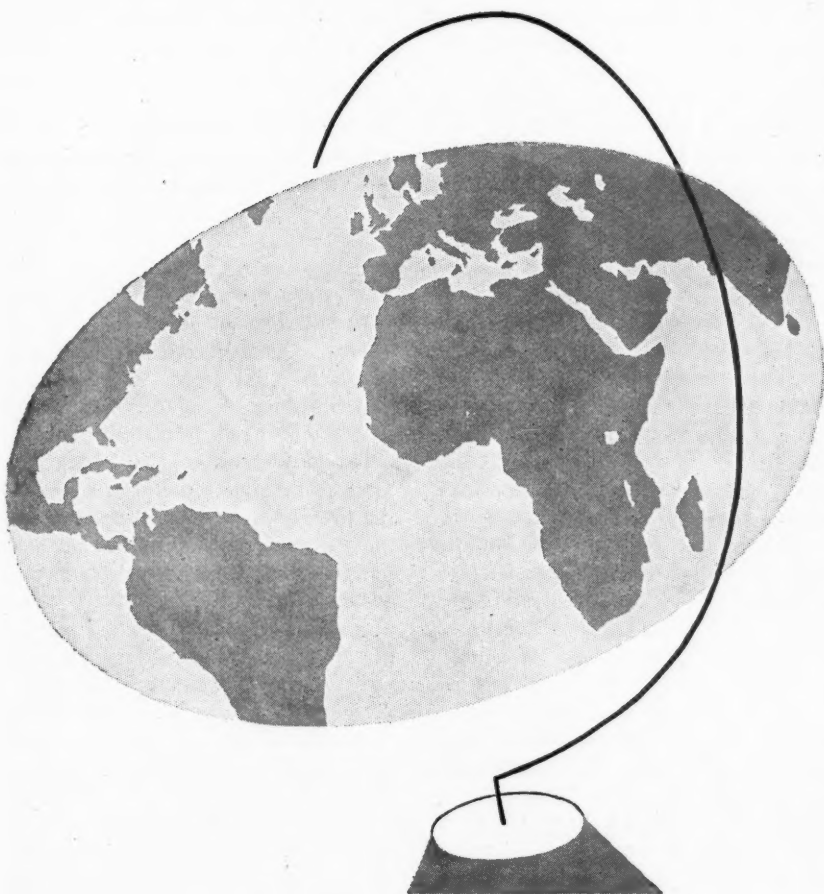
Miss Sylva Norman's methods of investigation are novel, and her curiously named *Flight of the Skylark* is an inquiry into the development of Shelley's reputation, beginning with his death. It should be remembered that in 1822, when he was drowned, his fame was small indeed. He had been vilified on all sides for his atheism, and the *Courier* could dismiss him contemptuously with the valedictory, "Shelley, the writer of some infidel poetry, has been drowned; now he knows whether there is a God or no," while *John Bull* went even further. "The visitation (death)," it commented, "is, therefore, striking; and the termination of his life (considering the creed) not more awful than surprising."

Beginning at this point, Miss Norman, whose insight is matched by her excellent expository style, moves swiftly down the years to the close of the century, when the poet was established firmly as a classic, with a Shelley Society to sing his praises. She shows how it all happened and the people who had a hand in it. She gives by far the best and most satisfying portrait of Mary Shelley that has ever been painted. There is an agreeable sketch of their son, Sir Percy, to whom R. L. S. dedicated *The Master of*

Ballantrae, and of whom he wrote: "He had a sweet original nature; I think I like him better than ever I should have liked his father." Godwin emerges as the tiresome, worrying person he must have been, and Trelawny, Jane Williams, Hogg, Medwin, Byron, the Hunts, Sir Timothy Shelley and others are brought to vivid life.

Out of all these people's actions and words and through their eyes Shelley himself emerges. Dame Edith Sitwell has called the book "*most vital and vitalizing*." So it is. It shows how Shelley became an "immortal," or at any rate a poet who "outrides exclusive movements, temporal sects, and the kind of interpretation that displays the critic chasing his own tail." This is Miss Norman's best book and it is worthy of its subject. I wish that the spelling could have been in the English, and not in the American style, but as Miss Norman was enabled to write by the generous patronage of Mr. Carl Pforzheimer, that is inevitable.

Another book which owes its completion to an American grant is Miss Veronica Wedgwood's *The King's Peace, 1637-1641*, being the first part of *The Great Rebellion*, in which she is to tell the story of the upheaval which robbed King Charles I of his life and turned England into a republic. Fittingly dedicated to Dr. G. M. Trevelyan, *The King's Peace* is a fine example of contemporary historical writing at its best, and what an odd blend of grace and culture, illusion and barbarism the period furnishes! "Here we are subject to error and misjudging one another," Strafford said on the scaffold, and the mistrusts and menaces of King Charles's reign and the years that followed divided Britain and brought tragedy into countless lives. And yet, after thirteen years on the throne, in 1637, Charles had said that he was the happiest King in Christendom. Not



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THE NATIONAL AND ENGLISH REVIEW

much more than four years later he had lost his authority in Scotland. In Ireland, the imposed framework of government had been shattered by a popular rising. "In England the King had pledged himself not to dissolve a Parliament which had destroyed his judicial powers, taken over the management of his finances, and awaited his return with an indictment such as had never been presented to a reigning English sovereign."

Miss Wedgwood traces very clearly the reasons for this startling change. Her handling of the Scottish affair is especially well done, and so is the account of the army in Ireland. The narrative carries one along and it seems unfair to the author to ask for more details about the common folk of the islands, more information about the impact of these high matters on the people who do not get themselves into the history books, but one would have liked to have them. It is a tribute to the book's excellence that one should have this feeling. This first volume has nearly 500 pages of text. It is so well told that I believe it could have been longer still with advantage to the reader.

It is a happy transition to go from Britain boiling up for civil war to one of the pleasantest of English regions at peace. Miss Edith Brill's *The Cotswolds* is one of the most picturesque of the *Regional Books*. She has taken as her territory the area of Gloucestershire hills roughly forty miles long by twenty miles broad lying north of Wotton-under-Edge, east of Gloucester and Cheltenham, and bordered by Fairford and Burford in the south-east, and by Chipping Campden in the north.

Physically and architecturally it is one of the most rewarding districts in the country. The lovely colouring of the stone, the gentle slopes of the hills, the abundant wild life, all combine to

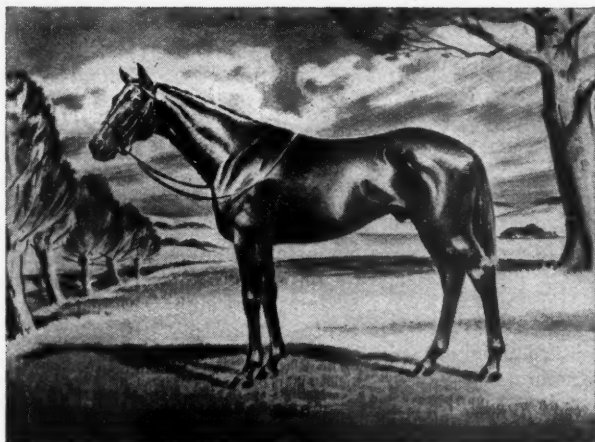
make the place attractive, and the people who have lived there are worthy of their lovely heritage. They are tolerant and moderate in their actions, like Mr. Sackville, lord of the manor of Bibury in the 17th century. The local parson having preached for an hour, would reverse his hour glass and assure the congregation that he meant to "continue in his sermon" *only* one hour longer. At this point Mr. Sackville usually retired to smoke a pipe, but "always returned in time for the benediction."

One of the reasons for the comparatively unspoiled aspect of the Cotswolds is that the towns and villages flowered into their greatest architecture between the end of the 14th century and the middle of the 16th. This was the time of the area's prosperity when the raw wool trade was at its peak. The population did not increase rapidly between the two World Wars, and in consequence the Cotswolds are mainly free from the bungalowoid and utilitarian growths which disfigure other parts of the country. Miss Brill is a friendly, competent guide. She has done justice to the subject of her choice. The photographic illustrations are beautiful.

A Kite's Dinner: Poems, 1938-54, by Sheila Wingfield, is the latest choice of the lately formed Poetry Book Society, and, like its two predecessors, it deserved the honour. I knew the writer only as the author of *Real People*, an admirable prose book, and her poetry like her prose is strong and simple. Her imagery is precise. Here is one more happy augury of the return to poetical sanity. Miss Wingfield's poetry should be read. It gains from being read aloud, always a good sign. Her *Beat Drum, Beat Heart*, a long meditative poem written with most happily sustained inspiration, is itself good. It promises even better things for the future.

ERIC GILLET.

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DIGGING UP THE PAST

THE PLAIN AND THE ROUGH PLACES. By Mary Gough. Chatto & Windus. 15s.

BOOKS written by the wives of Archæologists form a minor genre of their own. I have read several of them, but this is the first I have been able to enjoy. Here difficulties and discomforts are neither exaggerated nor too heroically endured; there is no trace of that horrified obsession with hygiene found in many American books of this kind, where the attacks of our insect parasites are made to seem as terrible as an ambush of lions.

The Plain and the Rough Places is thoroughly agreeable. It is not exceptionally well written, has little construction, and no pretence to scholarship, but in this lack of pretension lies its very real charm. Mary Gough writes with the spontaneity of the snapshots illustrating her book, and with the amused good humour to be expected from the sympathetic-looking young woman who appears in some of them. So with a refreshing lack of effort she succeeds in conveying a lively picture of Cilician Turkey as it looks to young archæologists pursuing their researches on a shoestring.

For the Goughs are no excavators in the grand manner, working with motorized armies of assistants and labourers. During their first year in Cilicia they were quite alone, and even after five more seasons, although they have acquired a servant and better tents, they are still careless and rely for help on the occasional visits of friends.

I cannot judge the worth of the archæological survey carried out under such austere conditions, but certainly the austerity has been of immense advantage to the writing of this book. Members of powerful expeditions are remote from local life, moving in a world of their own where they are surrounded by fellow archæologists, protected by servants, and held out of reach of the natives by the very grandeur and importance of their undertaking. The Goughs are largely dependent on the goodwill of villagers, and so had to learn their language and how to deal with them on equal terms. At first, while language and

ignorance still made a bar, they found it difficult, but soon they were able to count many of the country people among their friends and were attending their parties and weddings as well as their sick-beds.

All these friendships, as well as chance encounters by the well, in shops and motor-buses, have enabled Mrs. Gough to give an intimate and personal impression of a Mediterranean peasantry just beginning to be touched by industrial civilization. For anyone who, like myself, is eager to find evidence of the relative merits of ancient and modern ways of life, this unbiased account will be of the greatest interest. Yet one example will be enough to show how hard it is to judge the issue. Returning to a district after several years, the Goughs found it alive with a new prosperity; progress had brought tractors, trailers (known as nylons, because they, like the stockings, were post-war novelties) and radio sets. Yet the thriving cotton trade on which all depended now kept the peasants sweating on the plain away from their summer houses in the cool of the hills. An old lady suffering from the stuffy heat complained "We never go to the *yayla* now . . . we have to wait for the cotton picking. It was much pleasanter when I was young." Is this the blind resistance of old age, or is there sense in it? We can answer according to our prejudice, but with gratitude to Mrs. Gough for catching the fact as it flies.

The Plain and the Rough Places is perhaps most to be recommended for its fresh vision of countryside and people, but it does not allow us to forget the long history stretching behind them. Cilicia has seldom been at the centre of things, but it has felt the main tides of Mediterranean history; it was influenced by Egypt and Mycenae, it knew Hittites, Greeks, Romans and Arabs before the coming of Armenians and Turks. It had great visitors—Alexander, Pompey, Anthony and Cleopatra, Harun al-Rashid—as well as its one famous citizen—Paul of Tarsus.

Mrs. Gough keeps us in mind of all these past grandeurs, but beyond the rest she is concerned with the remains of Imperial Rome, for it is these that she and

Digging up the Past

her husband are striving to discover and record before they are destroyed by progress and peasants greedy for building stone. She leaves us with some memorable glimpses of the once mighty Anazarbus lying ruined below its huge, isolated crag, of the noble line of Corinthian columns ranged between sea and sky at Pompeopolis, and of Diocaesarea appearing as a perfect classical city when first seen black against the afterglow of sunset.

Altogether this little book gives so attractive an idea of their Cilician adventures that I venture to guess Michael and Mary Gough may be embarrassed by the number of unknown enthusiasts who volunteer for their next expedition.

JACQUETTA HAWKES.

ENGLAND'S HEY-DAY ?

VICTORIAN PEOPLE. By Asa Briggs.
Odhams. 18s.

TO contribute anything new to our knowledge of Victorian England is (with almost more people ready to write about it than to read about it) not easy. Biographies of eminent Victorians, of less eminent ones and of frankly tedious ones, tumble out of our publishers' warehouses with the eager innocence of the Gadarene swine. The fate of such books is not always greatly different—perhaps because the wise reader is turning back with increasing satisfaction to those earlier biographies—those solemn but ample eulogies full of politics and life with something of the sober pace of a Trollope novel. Mr. Asa Briggs, who has an established position as one of the most penetrating observers of the 19th century, points out that Lytton Strachey, who attacked the conventional biography in the preface to *Eminent Victorians*, could not conceive that the time was just round the corner when "the dusty Victorian biographies would be pulled down from the shelves."

Mr. Briggs, in this admirable work, has attempted something fresh and (to use the old 18th century expression) he has succeeded. He has based his book not on personalities (in spite of his title), not on movements but on a period of time—the

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MACMILLAN

high noon of Victorian England before the slow and imperceptible decline through the long enervating day. A man of the younger generation, Mr. Briggs refers to people now in their maturity as "old Georgians"—for a second the reader thinks he is alluding to some sturdy ruffian from south Russia, or some full-blooded Hanoverian, but he merely means those of us who recall the coronation of King George V. Readers of this journal, who fall within that description, may be surprised to learn that "the strident imperialism" of the 1890's and early 1900's, was really a symptom of decline. Mr. Briggs follows the distinguished French writer Halévy in suggesting that this was really an escape from the harsh and sobering portent that British industry was ceasing to hold its position in the world market.

But in the period he has chosen, which is ushered in by the great Exhibition and ends with the Conservative Reform Bill of 1867, there were no apparent cracks in the

well-found structure of prosperity. At worst those mid-Victorians seem to have feared some catastrophic upheaval—in 1848 Carlyle gave both the Church and aristocracy an existence of only five more years—not the possibility of diminishing affluence. In fact, the events of the century were to make it true to say with Browning that it was "never glad, confident morning again"; but at the time the politicians, writers and leaders of labour of whom Mr. Briggs writes were blissfully unmindful of this, and he has faithfully caught the feelings of optimism and self-reliance from which sprang the vitality of the decade.

The book is designed for the general reader, and those accustomed to the effervescing trifles of our lady historians should be warned that they may find this in parts full-blooded and weighty. (Mr. Briggs has presumably followed the habits of the Victorians in omitting any references or list of authorities and in providing a merely skeleton—and inadequate—index). Many readers will be grateful to him for recalling to mind that strange statesman Robert Lowe—perhaps the most distinguished personage who ever lived at Warlingham. His wit was outstanding and once, in the House of Commons, when another Member put up his ear-trumpet to hear what was being said, Lowe remarked: "Look at that fool throwing away his natural advantages." Gladstone had a great admiration for his gifts and he urged Queen Victoria to make him a viscount on the grounds that "a man who had once soared to those heights trodden by so few, ought not to be lost in the common ruck of official barons." Although Mr. Briggs does not develop the theme, this showed courage on Gladstone's part, since Lowe had gained the Queen's lasting hatred for attacking Disraeli's mistaken and tawdry idea of adding the imperial title to the ancient English kingship. But Mr. Briggs does not linger over themes like these, for his particular interest is with the industrial North, and again the picture which he draws for us, from that murky vantage point, is new and striking.

ROGER FULFORD.

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Novels

DRINKERS OF DARKNESS. Gerald Hanley.
Collins. 12s. 6d.

THE HIDDEN RIVER. Storm Jameson.
Macmillan. 12s. 6d.

GOOD MORNING, MISS DOVE. Frances
Gray Patton. *Gollancz. 10s. 6d.*

GO, LOVELY ROSE. Jean Potts. *Gollancz.*
10s. 6d.

NIGHT FALLS ON CAPE HORN. A. de Saint
Loup. *Hutchinson. 12s. 6d.*

GERALD HANLEY'S *Drinkers of Darkness* is, like his two previous books, *The Consul at Sunset* and *The Year of the Lion*, set in Africa. Mambango is a strip of dubiously fertile territory in East Africa which has been purchased for development by a London syndicate. The time is 1937, when the old easy days of Colonial administration had gone, but the problems which were to flare up after the war were only smouldering.

Tamlin is the manager of Mambango Estates, a rough diamond, whose ruling passion is work. He is not a romantic; he is simply there to make Mambango pay and as long as the native labourers work well he will treat them with consideration. When he is first threatened with a strike he is incredulous; when an informer is murdered he is furious. Only very slowly does it dawn upon him that the white man's gospel of democracy is a solvent which will eventually make jobs like his impossible. Tamlin is not a gentleman, it doesn't bother him, but it does bother some of his colleagues. There are two ex-Regular Army officers who, having the same background and having acquired no skills likely to be useful in times of peace, are thrown together in a sort of intimacy: they know that the Mambangos of the world are the last resort of their kind. There is also a weak creature aptly called Mooning, who has married the sort of woman calculated to cause trouble in a community where white women are few; and an Irishman, O'Riordan, who takes refuge from his Catholic peasant conscience in gibes and drink. Between the whites and the blacks is an "off-white" community of overseers and technicians, Portuguese,

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THE NATIONAL AND ENGLISH REVIEW

Anglo-Indian and Belgian half-castes.

The stage is admirably set for an interplay of character, with tensions within and without. Mr. Hanley's theory is that Africa exaggerates whatever is the characteristic quality of a man, honour, energy, laziness, lust or drink. Nevertheless he has chosen to develop at the greatest length the two elements in the plot which, so it seems to me, might have occurred anywhere—the intrigue between Mooning's wife and the cashiered ex-officer, Plume, and O'Riordan's return to the faith of his fathers while dying horribly of cancer. The book has drive and vigour, you feel that it is about life, but because the less significant elements have been selected for the greatest emphasis, it remains a first-class example of the conventional "colonial" melodrama, when it might have been something more.

Miss Storm Jameson's *The Hidden River* is characteristic of her high seriousness and fine craftsmanship, in that it conceals, beneath a story of unflagging interest, her concern for the best things in the European inheritance. Adam Hartley, an English soldier who worked with the Resistance in France, comes back to a house on the Loire where he had once been hidden. He comes in a mood of romantic nostalgia, to be replaced by disquiet when he finds that here, even in this civilized household, are the ugly passions of recrimination which embitter French daily life and politics. An old man whose only crime was to decline to forget an old friendship with the German commandant, had been imprisoned and is released only because he is dying. His bitterness is matched only by that of his cousin, whose son was murdered by the Gestapo. The duel between the old man and the ageing woman who once loved him has the true French note of implacability; it is the most searing thing in the book. The problem of who betrayed Robert is solved by the reader before it is revealed; possibly the author intended this, for the climax is still to come. Adam Hartley, watching the tragedy unfold, is the spokes-

man of all that attracts and rebuffs the English Francophil when considering the French. If I have any criticism of this book, it is that the characters are all perhaps too eloquent. They state their case, even when it is a bad one, with such perfect clarity that each speech seems unanswerable until you read the reply. A luminous understanding, clear and mellow as the sunlight of Touraine, is brought to bear on the noble and the mean alike; but is some spark of vitality lost in its even glow? The mind is continually drawn from the individual tragedy to the larger issues, so that the people sometimes seem types rather than persons. Only the very greatest novelists can keep the two in balanced tension; I cannot think of anyone else now writing who could preserve it so well as Miss Jameson has in this book.

Good Morning, Miss Dove is a very seductive piece, one of those gentle, deceptively simple novels which bowl the reader over. *Miss Dove* is a school mistress who has, for more than a generation, instilled manners, discipline and geography into the youth of Liberty Hill, one of those small American communities where virtue still flourishes. The plot of the book is so simple that it often gets lost, but no reader could mind, because it strays down so many byways of human nature and because one knows that it will come back in due course, for the author controls it as effortlessly as *Miss Dove* controlled her class. It is a sentimental, but not a saccharine comedy; the distinction of the writing and the sharpness of the author's vision give it an agreeable slight astringency, like the best fairy tales.

When I began *Go, Lovely Rose*, I was dogged by the feeling that the author had written it round the title quotation for a bet. Rose Henshawe is not at all lovely and the world round her isn't very pretty either. I groaned when I encountered the suspect who had had a black-out for the crucial period and the bouncing teen-ager named Bix who was so obviously Daddy's darling girl. Having assembled an unconvincing team, Miss

BOOKS IN BRIEF

Potts then begins to show what can be done with them, and that is quite something. She plays up suspicions and tensions with remarkable skill and her *dénouement* is first class. The fact that you don't feel that anybody is going to be happy ever after may be due to the pan-American way of life, or it may mean that Miss Potts is a serious novelist after all. She has certainly, after a sticky start, written a very good detective story.

The last book listed is not a novel in the true sense, but it is published as such for lack of a more precise category. *Night Falls on Cape Horn* is a closely documented account of the activities of the early nineteenth-century Protestant missionaries in Tierra del Fuego, activities which resulted in the extermination of whole tribes of Indians without noticeably advancing Christianity. Almost all the incidents and characters of this book are historical, except the chief figure. Duncan MacIsaac is a Scottish Methodist who believes that he is sublimating his passions in his determination to win the Yagans, the Onas and the Alakufs for Christ. He is not an attractive character, his religion is crude, his knowledge of human nature elementary and his self-deception revolting. But he compels respect by his powers of endurance and undoubtedly the writer has succeeded in his presentation of the driving ego which such men have to possess. The portrait, however, is not filled out with irony or sympathy; it is left to speak for itself in this recital of the damage that can be wrought by an uncomprehending fanatic, or perhaps, more fairly by the impact on a static primitive culture of a highly developed mechanical civilization.

RUBY MILLAR.

BOOKS IN BRIEF

THE Archbishop of York is celebrating his eightieth birthday by the publication of a new book, *World Problems of To-day* (Hodder, 4s. 6d.), and a revised edition of an excellent old one, *The Claims of the Church of England* (Hodder, 4s. 6d.). Dr. Garbett is a clear and forceful writer, and his new work, intended as "a small

contribution to help the Christian to make up his mind on some of the most important of the world problems of our time," should have exactly the effect he intends.

* * *

The Struggle for Mastery in Europe, 1848-1918 (Cumberlege, O.U.P., 30s.), by A. J. P. Taylor, is the first volume in a new series, *The Oxford History of Modern Europe*, edited by Alan Bullock and F. W. D. Deakin. Beginning with the fall of Metternich, it ends with the ideals of internationalism propounded by Lenin and Wilson. It is a lively survey of a difficult, complex period.

* * *

Books about under-sea exploration seem to be competing with inquiries into the nature of the universe and popular archaeological work just now. *The Blue Continent* (Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 21s.), by Folco Quilici, is beautifully produced with over sixty illustrations, twenty-six of them in full colour. It tells the story of the

Philip Gibbs

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Italian National Underwater Expedition, which set out in 1952 to explore the depths of the Red Sea. It contains an enormous variety of submarine life.

* * *

Mr. Richard Harrington's *The Face of the Arctic* (Hodder & Stoughton, 15s.) is a documentary cameraman's account of five journeys with Eskimos into the far North. The book is readable and unambitious. The illustrations are excellent.

* * *

Topographical writing to-day is a flourishing form and Mr. Brian Waters does this kind of thing very well. *The Bristol Channel* (Dent, 16s.) is the third book in his "Severn" trilogy. It gives a pleasant, companionable account of the longest and largest inlet in Britain's coastline. Illustrated.

* * *

Hilaire Belloc, a descendant of Dr. Joseph Priestley, used to claim that his

ancestor was a man of great meekness coupled with violent convictions. There have been several serious biographies of the discoverer of oxygen, and now Mr. J. G. Gillam has subjected him to popular, fictionalized treatment. It should appeal to the scientifically minded young and to British film studios in search of an unusual subject. It is called *The Crucible* (Hale, 21s.).

* * *

Just before the First War every city had its pageant and Louis Napoleon Parker produced many of them. His grandson, Mr. Anthony Parker, also an enthusiast, has written *Pageants, Their Presentation and Production* (Bodley Head, 15s.). An indispensable guide to anyone brave enough to undertake one.

* * *

The Pick of Punch, 1955 (Chatto & Windus, 12s. 6d.) has been made by an unknown hand. Well illustrated in colour, and black and white, the emphasis is on Mr. Punch's more genial characteristics. As evidence of the quickening effect of Mr. Muggeridge's editorial policy, it may be noted that Mgr. Knox, Robert Graves, John Betjeman, Noel Coward, Richard Gordon and Joyce Cary are among the contributors.

* * *

Among recent re-issues made by Messrs. Dent in their revised Everyman's Library may be found Richardson's *Pamela* (2 vols., 6s. each), Meredith's *The Ordeal of Richard Feverel* (7s.), and Sir Thomas More's *Utopia* and his moving *Dialogue of Comfort* in one volume (6s.).

E. G.

Financial

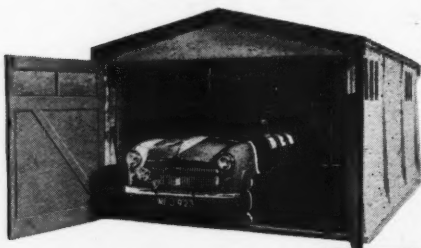
MARKET REVIEW

By LOMBARD

STOCK markets have been subject to a number of exceptional influences during January, and have maintained their price levels remarkably well.

The threat of a railway strike caused no alarm among investors; indeed, the

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MARKET REVIEW

prevailing conviction was that the wage demands would be met, and that a further measure of inflation would thereby result. Equity prices hardened in consequence. After the settlement based on the report of the Court of Enquiry, the market continued optimistic, and during the month the shares of those companies likely to benefit from increased spending power (such as the Stores Group) moved to higher price levels.

With the publication of some of the official annual statistics early in January, there were renewed hopes of the upward trend continuing throughout the year. Personal spending in the third quarter of 1954 was higher than ever before, and the spheres that showed the greatest gain from the expenditure were the clothing and household goods industries. These facts helped the market in the securities concerned, on the argument that the record sales last year will be reflected in the profits shown in the balance sheets which will be presented this year. The knowledge that millions of pounds would be added to the nation's weekly wage packets prompted the belief that the higher level of production would be maintained, if not increased, during 1955.

When the dividends of some of the Banks were announced even the more cautious found ground for accepting the theory that dividends could, and would be increased by many companies. If the Banks can increase their distributions to stockholders, industry certainly can, was the general assumption. Fresh buying of Equities followed, and the *Financial Times* Index passed the 190 mark.

The American scene provided an interesting episode. The margin of credit allowed on the purchase of stocks was cut by the authorities. Instead of being allowed to pay only 50 per cent. of the cost of stocks, investors were told they must pay 60 per cent. A sharp bout of selling followed, and share prices fell heavily. Dollar stocks in London followed the Wall Street prices. London paused, wondered how far this could go, and then decided that this American reaction was a technical one which would

not affect our industrial prosperity. Buying of Equities continued; after three days the American "shake-out" was over and Wall Street began to recover.

This episode caused many people to speculate on the possibility of Government action being taken here. It was noted that in spite of the fact that the American bull market is based on a sound expansion of industry, the Administration had seen fit to take action—albeit only mild action—to warn investors that excessive speculation was undesirable. The elimination of weak holders was considered a healthy consequence, and the rally which followed was based on the conviction that the level of prosperity would continue through 1955, even if the pace slackened. The warning, however, led many to examine the technical position of the London market, where for some time Equity prices had been ignoring the lead provided by the Gilt-Edged market, which is normally followed.

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How far have Equity prices discounted the probable increases in dividends in the future? Has optimism been too headstrong and caused markets to go beyond the levels the sober and prudent would prefer? Will the Chancellor take action to curb the enthusiasm of investors?

These and similar questions have caused market men to look more anxiously at the indicator which flashes the change or "No Change" in the Bank Rate to the Stock Exchange on Thursday mornings. Some have argued, with perhaps permissible scepticism, that the "No Change" light will continue to shine as long as the Realization Agency is in process of selling steel company shares to the public. How, they were asking, could the Chancellor raise the rate when the Agency is in the process of selling Colvilles' shares to investors? It would upset the market and foul the operation.

Others have been watching the discount rates, and noting that there has been an appreciable rise in the market rate for Treasury Bills since November. It can be argued that the Government has been behind this move, and that they have, in fact, been manipulating the discount rates in order to make the current Bank Rate more effective. Whatever the answer may be, the effect has been to make many people approach the market with greater caution.

One fact is important to those who believe that Equity shares provide the best home for capital in a period of "creeping inflation." This is the extent to which Equities have been, and are being bought by Pension Funds. These funds—taking the group in the widest sense—are becoming a growing force in the Equity market, since most are now investing a proportion of their funds in good class Equities. They take stock off the market and put it away. It is not likely that they will buy when prices are so high that yields have discounted most of future prospects. They therefore tend to act as a steadying influence in a falling market, and, by taking large blocks of stock off the market, they cause a shortage when other investors are trying to get

stock on a rising market. This tends to put the price up. Their activities are of growing importance in the Stock Exchange, and in management-labour relations.

There is a social aspect of this process which has significant implication for the future. The employees are acquiring a stake—since their old age is affected—in Equity investment, and they are therefore linked with the general prosperity of industry. Some of the Trade Union leaders are beginning to talk boldly to their rank and file on the subject. A member of the T.U.C. General Council was reported as saying recently "there are those who are always ready to denounce employers whose management policies produce high and rising profits, but I think we ought to be very careful before indulging in outright condemnation." He gave four criteria for the distribution of profits. Fair shares in prosperity through wages and working conditions: fair dividends to attract new capital: ample "ploughing back" to keep plant and machinery up to date: genuine efforts to reduce prices and keep them down.

Words from a T.U.C. leader with which most investors could wholeheartedly agree.

LOMBARD.

RECORD REVIEW

Orchestral

THE FINANCIAL TIMES reported on the front page of its issue of December 21, 1954, that sales of gramophone records had risen constantly during the year, and that consumer expenditure in Britain had amounted to £12 million, compared with £10 million in the previous year. There can be no question that long-playing discs contributed largely to this impressive result: although the 10-inch 78 r.p.m. discs of current popular hits, which remain the real money makers, have maintained and even improved their position.

Sales of all types of discs will, no doubt, rise again this year; but if manufacturers

RECORD REVIEW

wish to keep their L.P. customers happy they should do everything possible to improve record surfaces. There are still far too many complaints of plops and roars; and the customer who buys what appears to be a disc with an unblemished surface wonders nervously if it will indeed sound that way when he plays it at home.

It can be assumed that measures are being taken to combat this occasional cause of complaint—one that has always been current in the gramophone world—and if to fine recording, portability, and unbreakability, can be added consistently silent surfaces we shall all rise up, call the companies blessed, and add to their profits.

Interesting extensions of the repertoire continue. Sir Arthur Bliss's *Music for Strings*, one of his best works and in a neo-Elgarian vein, is splendidly played, under his direction, by the strings of the Philharmonia Orchestra; and on the reverse there is an equally fine perform-

ance, by the same forces, of a suite from the ballet *Miracle in the Gorbals*, music full of dramatic power and compassion, and extraordinarily rich in melody (Columbia 33CX1205). One of my unfading recollections of the great days of the Russian Ballet is Karsavina's performance in Balakirev's *Tamara*, one of the masterpieces of Russian music; and as I listened to Ansermet's vivid interpretation of the score, beautifully played by the Suisse Romande Orchestra, I saw again the cruel Georgian princess luring her ill-fated lovers to the Castle above the River Terek, into which they were cast before morning. The remainder of the disc is occupied by Liadov's *Baba Yaga*, *Kikimora*, and *Eight Russian Popular Songs*. The first two pieces—and especially the second—are really frightening and brilliantly imaginative music, and the *Popular Songs* are wholly delightful. This is a superlatively good record (Decca LXT2966).

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THE NATIONAL AND ENGLISH REVIEW

Ballet meets us again in Roussel's fascinating musical story of a spider's banquet and its tragic end, *Le Festin de l'Araignée*, with which is coupled some delicate and lyrical music by him to a play by G. Jean Aubry, *Le Marchand de sable qui passe*. These two pieces receive excellent performances from the Radiodiffusion Française Orchestra under René Leibowitz (London International TWV91055).

Mahler is represented this month by his First and Eighth Symphonies. No. 1 is splendidly played by the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, conducted by Kubelik, and exceedingly well recorded. There is much exquisitely lyrical writing in the first three movements and a powerful last movement (Decca LXT2973). The "Symphony of a Thousand" (to give it its nickname) calls for huge forces, eleven soloists, boys and mixed choirs, and a large orchestra that includes organ, harmonium and piano! This recording was made at the Holland Festival in March, 1954, Eduard Flipse directing the Rotter-

dam Choirs, Philharmonic Orchestra and team of soloists (amongst whom are Zadek, Knupper, Vroons Frick and Schey) and it is remarkably successful. I had not heard this work since Sir Henry Wood gave it at Queen's Hall many years ago. It is uneven, but the impact of the *Faust* section, and of the hymn *Veni creator spiritus*, is as tremendous as I remember it (Philips ABL3024-5).

Also recommended

First-rate performances of Haydn's "Military" Symphony (No. 100) and No. 102 in B Flat, which has a serenely beautiful slow movement orchestrated with unusual subtlety (Solti and L.P.O.) (Decca LXT2984); Schubert's First and Second Symphonies (D and B flat), lovingly played by Beecham and the R.P.O. (Philips ABL3001) and—a bit streamlined—Dvorak's G Major Symphony (No. 8, or 4), with a brilliant performance of his *Scherzo Capriccioso*, by Swallisch and the Philharmonia Orchestra (Columbia 33SX1034).

Chamber Music

It is good to find some attention being given to the chamber music of British composers, and there is much quiet enjoyment to be had from Berkeley's *Sonatina for Violin and Piano* and *Theme and Variations for Solo Violin* and Rubbra's second *Sonata for Violin and Piano*. Grinke is the excellent violinist, and he has the advantage of the composers of the above works to accompany him (Decca LXT2978). The Hungarian String Quartet complete Beethoven's Op. 18 on Columbia 33CX1191, a good and well-recorded job. Those who like a dry wine should try Hindemith's *Quintet for Wind Instruments* and Poulenc's *Sextet for Piano and Wind*, played by the Fine Arts Wind Players, with Leona Lurie as pianist in the Poulenc. Here are craftsmanship (Hindemith) and wit (Poulenc); the heart is absent (Capitol CTL7066).

Instrumental

A fine performance on the harpsichord—not over-recorded but sounding natural—of Bach's *Chromatic Fantasy*

THE NATIONAL AND ENGLISH REVIEW

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Record Review

and *Fugue* by Fernando Valenti (Nixa LLP8047), and a complete recording of the first two books of Couperin's harpsichord pieces by Ruggero Gerlin (OL50052-60) which, generally excellent, will have a special interest for students.

Choral and Song

On LXT2945 Decca have recorded some *Laudi Spirituali* of the 13th to 16th centuries and some sacred music by Palestrina and Victoria, all arranged for four voices and sung by the Quartetto Polifonico with extraordinary fervour and devotion. Palestrina's joyful *Hodie Christus Natus est* suffers from the transposition—but this is a remarkably beautiful disc.

Archive, who are issuing a series of records in the nature of a history of music, offer Handel's *German Arias* (sacred songs) well sung by Margot Guillaume (soprano) with varied instrumental accompaniment, and the plainsong *Mass for All Souls*, very well sung by the Monk's Choir of Beuron Abbey (Archive APM14031 and 14002).

Opera

A virtually complete recording of Berlioz's *Les Troyens à Carthage* is a great event; and though some of the solo singing could be better (and also some of the orchestral playing), this is an issue that lovers of Berlioz must have. Arda Mandikian gives a fine performance of Dido, lacking only in vocal power, and Jean Girardeau is adequate in the lyrical music. Scherchen conducts the orchestra of the Conservatoire de Paris (London DTL93001-3). The last disc contains the quartet, septet, love duet, and *Chasse Royale*, a feast of the most beautiful music. Decca have issued three of Verdi's operas, *Rigoletto* (LXT5006-8), *La Traviata* (LXT2992-4) and *Otello* (LXT5009-11), which I must leave over until next month, only saying now that Tebaldi gives lovely performances in the first two and that the much criticized tenor, Mario del Monaco at last reveals his true stature as Othello.

ALEC ROBERTSON.

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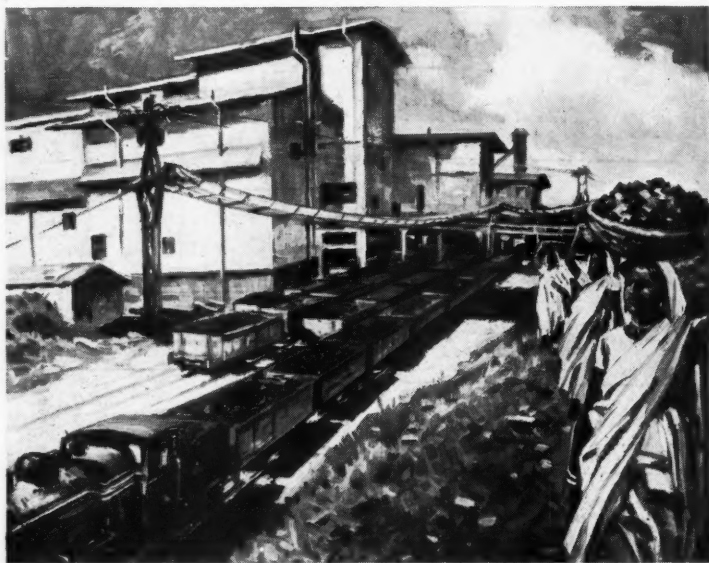
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Printed in Great Britain by THE WHITEFRIARS PRESS LTD., London and Tonbridge. Entered as Second Class at the New York U.S.A. Post Office. Published for the Proprietors from 2 Breems Buildings, London, E.C.4.